

<sup>A</sup>  
L E T T E R

T O A

*Minister in the Country :*

Afferting

The National-Covenant; the Solema  
League and Covenant, well warrant-  
ed from the New Testament, and  
therefore lawful and perpetually  
binding.

In Answer to a late anonymous Letter, hold-  
ing them forth as having no Ground or  
Warrant from the New Testament, and  
therefore unlawful, and by all Means to  
be avoided.

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By a Lover of the Covenanted Reformation, as a hap-  
py Mean of Conservation of Truth and Peace.

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*Jer. ix. 3. — But they are not valiant for the Truth  
upon the Earth.*

*Jer. xxiii. 16. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, hearken  
not unto the Words of the Prophets, that prophesie  
unto you; they make you vain: They speak a Visi-  
on of their own Heart, and not out of the Mouth of  
the Lord.*

*Isa. lx. 16. — And shall suck the Breasts of Kings,  
and thou shalt know that I am the Lord thy Savi-  
our.*

*Ne forte aut indisciplinata patientia foveat iniqui-  
tatem, aut impatiens Disciplina dissipet unitatem.  
Aug. L. contra Denatistas. post Collationem. Cap. 4.*

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Reader,

THE Author of this Letter, having no further View or Intention in his Writing thereof, than an Essay to vindicate our Covenants National and Solemn League, by way of a private Missive, from the Obloquy and Reproach cast on them by the Author of a late Anonimous Letter, said to be a present Minister of this Church: The Drift and Scope of which being to subvert our blessed Reformation from Popery, Prelacy, &c. as the rearing up again of another Levitical Priesthood, in Imitation of the now abrogate Sinitick Covenant, in Contradistinction to Christ in his New Testament Dispensation, and by this Means to induce such credulous Ones, as give him implicate Faith, to abandon all Regard to the awful Oath of God, perpetually binding those three Nations, viz. Scotland, &c.

The Author then having not the least Design or Purpose of publishing his Undertaking, may in some Measure apologize for such Inaccuracies, which these of a critical Disposition may espy and reprehend therein: And having yielded to the Desire and Solicitation of several Friends and Wellwishers to the covenanted Cause, for its Appearance from the Press, he commits it to the Lord, to render it an effectual Mean in his own Hand, to wipe off the Ignominy, blackening our covenanted Reformation, and also the memorable Piety, Learning, Faithfulness and Zeal of its firm Promoters, our reforming Ancestors, arising from the diverse erroneous, arrogant and false Charges led against the Covenants by the prejudicate Anticovenanting Author of that Criminal Letter.

That the Lord, with whom is the Residue of the Spirit, may revive among all Ranks and Stations both in Church and State, that reforming covenanting Spirit, which animated and acted that noble Cloud of Witnesses, who contended for the Faith in a Way of mutual covenanting, even unto Blood, against the common Enemy of Truth and Peace; that the Truth of the Gospel might be held and preserved in this Land and handed down to Posterity pure and entire, is the longing Desire and earnest Prayer of,



A

# Letter to a Minister in the Country, &c.

V. R. Sir,



Received your last Letter, about the beginning of *May* last; but delayed to make any Return, until I had thoroughly weighed an anonymous Paper, (written by one of your Brethren, as some alledge) containing certain Scruples against our Covenants National and Solemn League: Which Paper, I apprehend, is not latent in your Country, it being transmitted hither from *Montrose*; the Contents of which have, and do yet still occasion me much Grief and Sorrow of Heart, chiefly, because of the precious evangelick Truths brought, and made use of therein, to support and set off these Scruples. I have been at some Pains to consider them, and their Consistency, with the Word of God, laying it before the Lord for Light, to discover the Injury done to the Cause of God, and the Manner of carrying on this blessed Cause, *viz.* in a Way of Solemn Covenanting in this Land especially since, the Days o

famous Mr. Knox, until the Year 1650, in Opposition to Antichrist, and his indefatigable Abettors, who used all hellish Machinations, both of Craft and Force, to bear down the Kingdom of Christ in the Land, and extinguish Gospel-light therein. Besides, I think all the Lovers of the Truth, as it is in Jesus, owes a due Regard to the Memory of these Worthies, whom the Lord was graciously pleased to raise up, ever since the Dawning of our happy Reformation, and honoured them, as Instruments in his Hand, to dispel the Darknes of *Antichristianism*, wherein their Fore-fathers were so long shut up; and thereafter the Darknes of *Prelacy* and *Erastianism*; against the prevailing and spreading of which Leaven, many contended even to Blood, that the Truth of the Gospel might be handed down pure and incorrupt to Posterity; the Remains whereof yet among us, or I may say, the Shadow of what they attained to under the Lord, is in some Respect owing to their laborious Witnessings, Wrestlings, Zealous, Valiant and Faithful Contendings for Christ, and the prevailing of his Cause and Interest in these covenanted Lands, thereby leaving to their Successors a noble Exemplar to imitate and walk by. I heartily regrete, that any one in this Church, professing such Acquaintance with the Mysteries of the Gospel, and God's Method of Grace in saving lost Mankind, should be left to improve his Talent, and imploy his Pen to the sullyng of this Glorious Cause, and the Repute of the renowned Promoters thereof, and the shaking the Faith of the Lord's People, especially of the weaker Sort, as to the Lawfulness and Scriptural Warrantableness thereof. If any of its Avouchers have given him Offence from any Zeal, which he may account indiscreet, which may be occasioned, through multiply'd Defections and Stumbling-blocks, of our unhappy Day of Division and Backsliding; this was no just Ground, warranting any whosoever, to load a good Cause with unjust Reflections, and groundless Accusations; be-

cause he finds some of its Abettors either ignorant of the Gospel-covenant, or indiscreetly zealous for the Covenants National and Solemn League. I shall not take upon me to vindicate the Ignorance, blind Zeal, or *Legalism* of any, let their Pretences be what they will; but I am sure, the covenanted Cause in *Scotland*, rightly understood, lays no Foundation for these Evils; it would be a strange Thing to conclude, and then assert the Doctrine of Grace to be a Legal Dispensation or Licentious, because some of its Hearers and Professors abuse it to *Liber-tinism*, others into *Legalism*, and that of the sub-tilest Kind, seeking Gracious Qualifications, or the Graces of the Spirit to build Christ upon, and not to build all upon Christ. But I pass to the Consideration and Review of his Views he hath of the New Testament Church, and its Distinction from the Church of the Old Testament, which have given Rise to his Scruples, with respect to our Covenants, especially the Solemn League, and the Lawfulness of entering into them, and therefore the Obligation of them.

He confines his Views to four particular Heads, which (as I take him) he states as four Distinctions of the Old Testament Church from the New. Which four Heads, upon a more narrow and exact Examination, he may come to find them mistaken Apprehensions of the true State of the Old Testament Church.

*Imo*, Upon the first Head, he says, *He thinks it was peculiar to the Old Testament of Israel, that the Commonwealth and the Church were the same, &c.* I answer, This overturns all Manner of Distinction between the Jewish Church, and Jewish State, confounding their Policies Ecclesiastical and Civil; asserting, *That to be a Member of that Commonwealth and of the Church were then the same.* The Author, in my humble Opinion, ought to have produc'd some solid Proof, for the Support and Confirmation of this Assertion; without which,  
he

he might have well known, many would not believe him; surely, the Scripture doth plainly speak and teach otherwise: But, by the By, I observe, That the Author has been unhappily left to deliver his Mind upon the whole of this Subject in such a dark, general and confused Manner, that he nonpluffeth his Reader to fathom what he would be at, holding out his Suppositions so dogmatically, for positive Truths, as if they were not, capable of Contradiction, or Refutation, and leaves them so unguarded, that he makes clear Way for any of his Examinators, to draw such Consequences, as are most dangerous and unsound. But to come to the Point, it is denied, That the Commonwealth and Church were the same; if he mean formally considered: For materially so none will dispute, and in this Respect the Church and State were of equal Extent, the same Members for ordinary being Members of both.

And that they were formally distinct, is invincibly proven by the renowned Mr. *George Gillespie*, in his *Aaron's Rod Blossoming*, in Opposition to Mr. *Coleman*, and other *Erastians* of his Day, denying that the Church of *Israel* had any Distinction of Church-Government and Civil Government. See *Book I. Chap. 2. Pag. 6*, and for the Benefit of such as want the Book, I shall insert here, so much as is sufficient for the Proof of the Point.

1. Then they were distinct in Respect of distinct Laws; the Ceremonial Law was given them in Reference to their Church-State; the Judicial Law was given to them, in Reference to their Civil State.

2. In Respect of distinct Acts: They did not worship God, and offer Sacrifices in the Temple, nor call upon the Name of the Lord, nor give Thanks, nor receive the Sacraments, as that State; but as that Church. They did not punish Evil-doers by Mulets, Imprisonment, Banishment, Burn-

‘ Burning, Stoning, Hanging, as that Church, but  
 ‘ as that State.’

‘ 3. In Respect of Controversies; some Causes  
 ‘ and Controversies did concern the Lord’s Matters,  
 ‘ some the King’s Matters; 2 *Chron.* xix. 11. To  
 ‘ judge between Blood and Blood was one Thing.  
 ‘ To judge between Law and Commandment, be-  
 ‘ tween Statutes and Judgments, that is, to give  
 ‘ the true Sense of the Law of God when it was  
 ‘ controverted, was another Thing.’

‘ 4. In Respect of Officers: The Priests and *Le-*  
 ‘ *vites* were Church-Officers, Magistrates and  
 ‘ Judges not so; but were Ministers of State. The  
 ‘ Priests might not take the Sword out of the Hand  
 ‘ of the Magistrates. The Magistrates might not  
 ‘ offer Sacrifice, nor exercise the Priest’s Office.  
 ‘ 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 16, 17, 18, &c.’

‘ 5. In Respect of Continuance; when the *Ro-*  
 ‘ *mans* took away the *Jewish* State and Civil Go-  
 ‘ vernment; yet the *Jewish* Church did remain,  
 ‘ and the *Romans* did permit them the Liberty of  
 ‘ their Religion. And now, tho’ the *Jews* have  
 ‘ no *Jewish* State, yet they have *Jewish* Churches.  
 ‘ Whence it is, when they tell where one did or  
 ‘ doth live, they do not mention the Town, but the  
 ‘ Church: *In the holy Church at Venice, at Frank-*  
 ‘ *fort, &c.* Buxtorf. *Lex. Rabin.* 1653.’

‘ 6. In Respect of Variation. The Constitution  
 ‘ and Government of the *Jewish* State was not the  
 ‘ same, but different under *Moses* and *Joshua*, under  
 ‘ the *Judges*, under the *Kings*, and after the Captivity.  
 ‘ But we cannot say the Church was new modelled,  
 ‘ as oft as the State was.

‘ 7. In Respect of Members. For as Mr. *Selden*  
 ‘ hath very well observed concerning that Sort of  
 ‘ Profelytes, who had the Name of *Profelyti justitiae*  
 ‘ *de jure natura*, i. e. Profelytes of Righteous-  
 ‘ ness, & *gentium*, *Lib. 2. Cap. 4. Lib. 5. Cap. 5.*  
 ‘ They were initiated in the *Jewish* Religion by  
 ‘ Circumcision, Baptism and Sacrifice: And they  
 ‘ were

were allowed not only to worship God apart by  
 themselves; but also to come into the Church and  
 Congregation of *Israel*, and to be called by the  
 Name of *Jews*: Nevertheless they were restrained  
 and secluded from Dignities, and Magistracies,  
 and Preferments in the *Jewish* Republick, and from  
 diverse Marriages, which were free to the *Israel-*  
*ites*; Even Strangers initiated and associated into  
 the Church of *Rome*, have not therefore the Pri-  
 vileges of *Roman* Citizens. Thus Mr. *Selden*, who  
 hath thereby made it manifest, that there was a  
 Distinction of the *Jewish* Church, and the *Jewish*  
 State; because those Profelytes being embodied  
 into the *Jewish* Church as Church Members, and  
 having a Right to communicate in holy Ordinances  
 among the rest of the People of God, yet were not  
 properly Members of the *Jewish* State, nor admitted  
 to civil Privileges: Whence it is also, that the Names  
 of *Jews* and Profelytes were used distinctly, *Acts*  
 2. 20. Hence the Groundlessnes of this Notion,  
 or rather Error, which I find runs this Author  
 into inaccountable Mistakes through the whole Ten-  
 nor of his Paper, evidently appears to the evanish-  
 ing of all the Scruples built thereon, in Prejudice of  
 our Covenants. In Pursuance of the same Head, he  
 says, *But in Opposition to this typical Church, which*  
*was an earthly Kingdom; the New Testament Church,*  
*consists not of any earthly Kingdom, nor of many*  
*Commonwealths joined in one.* In what Sense he calls  
 the Old Testament Church typical, he gives us not  
 to understand; if he mean she was absolutely so,  
 then he destroys her Essence as a Church, making  
 her no more than a mere Shadow of the Thing ty-  
 pified: But if he means she was typical only in Re-  
 spect of her Oeconomy; What doth this militate  
 against our Covenants, which are intirely and abso-  
 lutely exclusive of that typical Dispensation? Have  
 not all our Orthodox Divines, our own *Confessions*  
 of *Faith*, tully and clearly illustrate the Difference  
 betwixt the Old and New Testament Dispensations,

to the Author's Hand, which he seems to disparage by his contrary Insinuations? It is the Glory of the Kingdom of CHRIST, that it is universal, and not confin'd within the Bounds of one Nation, as it was before Christ's Incarnation, and that he shall prevail with those who were Enemies thereunto, to become his Subjects, and acknowledge the Church to be the Princess of Societies, and shall persuade, even whole Nations under the Gospel to become a Church to him, and a Part of his Kingdom, *Micah iv. 2. And many Nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, and the House of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his Ways, &c.* So then, it was no rearing up any earthly Kingdom in the Church, in Opposition to Christ's Spiritual Kingdom, for these three Kingdoms of *Scotland, England and Ireland*, to cast off the *Antichristian Yoke*, by a most solemn Renunciation of Popery and Prelacy, in all its Appurtenances, making solemn Promise to endeavour through Grace to extirpate Error, Schism, Heresy, Superstition, Prophaneſs, and whatsoever is contrary to sound Doctrine and the Power of Godliness, in a Suitableness to the above cited illustrious Prophecy. What he says further on this Head, I leave to be considered under the 4th Head, where he delivers himself much to the same Purpose; Only in the Close of this, he says, *That the visible Church upon the Earth, is a Society distinct from all earthly Common-wealths, &c.* So say all Covenanters too. Where did ever any, in any Age of the Church, more valiantly and faithfully contend for, and defend the Prerogatives of Christ's Crown, the Immunities and Privileges of his House, and that at the dearest Cost, even the Expence of their Blood and Treasure, in Opposition to State Usurpations thereon, than our Reformers and the Adherers to covenanted Principles? Which Practice is lamentably receded from in our chill Day of infamous Neutrality. But further, what should hinder, that

whole Kingdoms or Common-wealths, through the clear Discovery of the Glory, and high Privileges of the Church of Christ, by the Means of Gospel Light arisen upon them, and thereupon heartily yielding and giving themselves to the Lord, according to the above cited blessed Prophecy; and *Isa.* xlix. 62. 65. *Jer.* xxxi. 11, 12. *Psal.* lxxii 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17. And thus taking hold of God's Covenant, and joining themselves to him, in his Church; I say, what can hinder them in this Respect to be called Churches, I mean particular, visible Ones, without blending their Civil and Ecclesiastick State, especially when the due Distinction is maintained between their Policies; so that the Membership of the one as such, doth no Way natively infer the Membership of the other.

2dly, Upon the next Head, which is his 2d Distinction betwixt the Old and New Testament Church, he tells us, *The Common-wealth of Israel became a Church by virtue of the Covenants of Promise.* These Covenants ( as he takes it ) were the *Covenant of Circumcision* and the *Sinai Covenant.* Hence he leaves his Reader in the Dark again, and difficulted to interpret his Sentiments upon this Head. As for Circumcision, which was the Seal of the Covenant made with *Abraham*, *Gen.* xvii. was 430 Years before that of the *Sinai Covenant*, *Gal.* iij. 17. which Covenant made with *Abraham*, constitute him and his Household a Domestical Church, until the Multiplication of his Posterity into a numerous Body; then commenced the *Sinai Covenant*, upon their Delivery from the *Egyptian Bondage*, containing Laws, Moral, Ceremonial and Judicial; whereby they became a Common-wealth and National Church, formally distinct, as hath been already proved. He says further, *Now by the Sinai Covenant, the Jews held the Land of Canaan, that earthly Inheritance, &c.* This appears manifestly cross to the Scripture, *Gen.* xvii. 8. where we find this was ensured to *Abraham* and his Seed, according to the Covenant made with him then; and

and this is confirmed from *Gal. iii. 18.* For if the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promise; but God gave it to Abraham by Promise. Now the *Sinai* Covenant being a Revival of the Law under its old Covenant Form, or a plat Form of the legal Righteousness, which was indispensibly necessary unto Life, *Lev. xviii. 5. Rom. x. 5.* and denounceth such a dreadful Curse upon the least Failure, *Gal. iii. 10.* that it behoved to be of an higher Intendment, than to issue out federal Blessings upon the Performance of *Israel's* Obedience thereto. If they had been strictly held by the Lord to the rigorous Condition thereof, they had stood under an utter Impossibility of reaping any temporal Blessings thereby. So then their Obedience thereto, could not be the procuring Cause of those temporal Blessings promised therein. To run out into an Enlargement upon the Nature and Design of this *Sinai* Covenant here, would be too foreign to my present Purpose in this Letter. In short then, I accord with them, who judge that Dispensation to hold forth the Way and Means, whereby Christ came under our Obligation, and by answering it, confirmed the Covenant of Grace: It held forth the legal condition of the Covenant of Grace, and promised nothing, but upon perfect Obedience; and this not to be performed by *Israel*, but by Jesus Christ. It is true, we find it promising temporal Mercies to *Israel*, upon Condition of their Obedience, *Lev. xxvi. 3, 4, 6. Deut. v. 33. vi. 1, 2, 3. and 17, 18.* but still with a Reference to the perfect Obedience of Christ, as the Fulfilment of its Condition for the Impetration of all federal Blessings: Spiritual and eternal Blessings being typically represented under those of temporal Blessings conditionally promised therein. And for Confirmation of this, read *Deut. ix. 4, 5.* but particularly *Ver. 6.* where we find, with what Vehemency the Lord doth deny, that the Fruition of the Land of *Canaan* was afforded *Israel*, for their personal Obedience; Three times over he doth inculcate this, the more

effectually to convince them, they were to possess it in a Way of Grace and free Favour, and that it was in Performance of the Word which he sware to their Fathers, to *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*.

What he adds further upon this Head, needful to be considered, I sum up here, passing every Thing else I find misapplied to support his Scruples; the Subject being unpleasant to any Lover of the covenanted Reformation, it makes it to be the more toilsome to seek to trace him in every Particular. In the last Place he says, *Now to seek the Thing typified by the old Covenants elsewhere, or to seek to imitate them by any earthly Covenants, or to bring in any earthly Covenants, into the New Testament Church, as a Foundation of Church Communion, is ( in his View ) cross to the New Testament Dispensation, and a bringing the Disciples again under the Yoke of Bondage; and therefore by all Means to be avoided, &c.*

Here is a Cluster of strange like Insinuations, holding forth either a strange Misunderstanding of our Covenants, as to the Occasion, Matter, and End of them; or a very unwarrantable Prejudice against them. I would soberly ask the Author, what he means by seeking the Thing typified by the old Covenant? Was not our Lord Jesus Christ in his doing and dying, the blessed Antitype of all those Types under that typical Dispensation? The Advancement of the Kingdom of this glorious Mediator was the grand End our Covenants aimed at, and as a Means hereunto, the Preservation of the reformed Religion in a Church antecedently constituted, *viz.* the Church of *Scotland*: And to endeavour the Reformation of Religion, in our Neighbouring Churches of *England* and *Ireland*, groaning under the Yoke of Antichristian Prelacy, Tyranny, Superstition, with other manifold Corruptions, and that in Opposition to the Enemies of Reformation, at that Time leaving no Mean unessay'd, to bear down and crush its Advancement. Again, I would ask, what he means by earthly Covenants,

nants, which were an Imitation of the old? If he mean our Covenants National and Solemn League, as I doubt not he does, then this must be either in reference to their Matter, or to their End; but in neither of these can they be accounted Earthly. *First*, Not in respect of their Matter or Objects: For their immediate formal Object, being the Word of God, and the Truths contained therein, with the Duties relative to them, *viz.* of receiving, observing, keeping them pure and intire, and an Abjuration of all Error and Heresie, with every thing contrary to sound Doctrine and the Power of Godliness: Their more remote and material Objects being the publick, necessary and great important Truths and Duties of the first and second Table therein enumerate, with the contrary Errors and Sins therein abjured.

2. Nor in Respect of their Ends, either primary or more subordinate: Their primary End being the Glory of God, and the Advancement of the Mediator's Kingdom; their more subordinate being Personal and National Reformation, indispensibly conducive to the former. And in this Regard, they contain a Confession of our Faith, in opposition to Popery, Prelacy, Error, Heresy, &c. therein most solemnly engaged against. Seeing then their Matter being objectively binding, how can the coming under their formal Tye, be the *Crossing the New Testament Dispensation*, or a *bringing the Disciples again under the Tye of Bondage*. If this should hold true, then farewell Baptism, as an Earthly Covenant, to be exploded out of the Church, which doth explicitly or consequentially bind us to all that our Covenants doth tye us to, as Mr. *Zacharias Craffton*, in his Answer to Doctor *Gauden*, his calling the Solemn League and Covenant, a *Piece of Policy, rather than Piety, and a Bar to the Baptismal Covenant*, doth plainly illustrate. Which Answer I here insert, for the Reader's Satisfaction, as follows.

“ Sure I am, says he, Baptismal Vows are no Bar, but

but may be Provocations to solemn Covenant-  
 ing with God. Let the Matter of this Covenant  
 be exactly scanned, and if it be in any one Ar-  
 ticle found repugnant to, or different from the  
 Covenant made in Baptism, we will renounce  
 the whole. I hope, it will not be denyed, that  
 baptised Nations and Churches may (in their pub-  
 lick and politick Capacities) renew and amplify  
 that Covenant which was made in Baptism: And  
 truly the Solemn League and Covenant seems  
 to me so little to differ from our Baptismal Cove-  
 nant, that it is no hard Matter to resolve it into  
 these three grand Heads. We are instructed, and  
 were promised in our Names, when we were bap-  
 tised; and then all the difference (as to our part)  
 will be in this: The Baptismal Covenant was Per-  
 sonal and Private, this publick and politick.  
*Again in his Treatise called St Peter's Fetters fasten-*  
*ed, Page 36. He says concerning the Matter of the*  
*solem League: But when I weigh the Particulars*  
 promised and find them to be the Preservation of  
 Religion and Reformation, wherein it is corrupted,  
 and the Removal of what is thereunto destructive;  
 as to the Religious Part of it, the Preservation of  
 the King's Prerogative, and People's Liberty, and  
 Nation's Unity, and the Removal of the Enemies  
 thereof; as to the Civil part thereof, my Conclu-  
 sion is established; and I find it so far from being  
 unlawful, that it binds not to any thing, which in  
 the Nature of it, is not on us a positive Duty, tho'  
 not bound by this sacred Bond. And so far is  
 this Covenant, from a Repugnancy to our Baptismal  
 Covenant, that it is no hard Matter to resolve it in-  
 to the three Heads of our Baptismal Promise. For  
 if I must believe the Articles of the Creed, I must  
 preserve sound Doctrine, and reform to my Power  
 what is corrupt. If I must keep God's Command-  
 ments, I must pursue pure Worship and Religion  
 towards God, and Loyalty, Love and Unity towards  
 Men. And if I must renounce the Devil  
 and

and all his Works, I must extirpate Popery, and  
 Papal Prelacy, Superstition, Heresie, Schism, and  
 Prophaness, &c. with all Incendiaries and evil In-  
 struments, Hinderers of Reformation.

He goes on further saying, *Tet this seems to me  
 to be done by our Covenants, whereby the Common-  
 wealth, as a Common-wealth, enters in to Church  
 Communion; as is evident from the first Article of  
 the Solemn League, wherein yet there are a great  
 many things distinct from the Foundation of Church  
 Fellowship, &c.* Answer, It is denied, that the  
 Common-wealth, merely as such, were received into  
 Church Fellowship through Means of the League and  
 Covenant; its Drift being never designed for Consti-  
 tution or Formation, but for Reformation of the  
 Church of Christ in the three Kingdoms of *Scotland,  
 England and Ireland*, in the Things wherein they  
 were corrupted. Were there any of the Covenant-  
 ers at that Time, who were not Members of Christ's  
 visible Church, prior to either the framing, or en-  
 tring into the League and Covenant? May not a  
 Common-wealth be both a Common-wealth and a  
 Church formally distinct, under a different respect?  
 I admire to find the Author quarreling at this rate,  
 without any solid Foundation for it. If it be at the  
 civil Part of the Covenant, he so much storms,  
 was not even that stated as a Part of the Covenant,  
 with an intire Subordination to its Religious Part?  
 Was not the Subjects Allegiance to the Supreme Au-  
 thority qualified therein according to the Scrip-  
 tures? Is not every Church Member, by the Com-  
 mand of Christ, bound to Swear a Scriptural Allegi-  
 ance to the supreme Magistrate, and to maintain the  
 Rights and Privileges of the supreme Judicatories  
 of these Nations, in pursuance of the Preservation and  
 Defence of the true Religion. and Maintainance  
 of the Liberties of the Kingdom, against the Com-  
 mon Enemy of both. *Lastly, he says, It is plain,  
 that the Church and Common-wealth are blended to-  
 gether in it, &c.* This being sufficiently refuted u-  
 pon

pon the first Head, I only add, He would make the World dream from such a Notion, that one and the same collective Body, cannot be both a Church and a State, diversely considered; and that our Lord Jesus, by his coming in the Flesh, had abolished all civil Government in his Kingdom: Whereas Civil Government and Governors, rightly founded on, and regulated by the Word, is among one of the great Blessings of his Government, promised to the New Testament Church, *Psal. lxxii. 2, 3. Isa. i. 26. Isa. lx. 17. Jer. xxx. 21. Ezek. xlv. 8. Zech. ix. 8.* He concludes this Head saying. *Yet it is a Church Covenant, establishing Communion upon such a Footing, as divided the Members of the visible Church from one another, and mixed in the Prophane World into the Communion of the Church.* Answer 1. I humbly think the Author should have adduced very clear Documents for the Proof of this, and other such like heavy Charges as he doth load our Covenants with, both here and through the whole of his Paper. 2. So far as I am capable to comprehend his Notion of Church Covenants from this Head, and his second Scruple founded thereon, he makes mutual and explicate Covenanting in any particular visible Church, in Things that concern necessary and uncontroverted Duty, the very formal Cause thereof, or that which gives Being and Constitution thereto: Which to hold, is very unsafe, for this Reason: Because, it would consequently follow; That all Saints, who are not after this manner explicitly Confederate, are not visible Church Members, and so no Members of Christ; or that a Man may be a visible Saint, and a Member of Christ, yet no Member of a visible Church. Yea, it destroys the Churches Essence and Being in Times of Persecution, when scattered far abroad from each other. Is not this a Handle given to Papists, to affirm, that there hath been no true visible Church, save that of *Rome*, for several Centuries; Because there was no such mutual Covenanting, as was requisite for giving a Church Being,

dur-

during the whole of that Hour and Power of Dark-  
ness. *Fides est forma Ecclesiae, fides enim ut in singu-  
lis fidelibus existens distributive, est forma vocatorum;  
sed in omnibus collective spectata, est forma ecclesiae,*  
Faith is the Form of the Church, for as Faith is be-  
held existing in Believers distributively, it is the  
Form of the called; but as it is considered in them  
collectively, it is the Form of the Church. All Cove-  
nancing among Men under whatsoever Denomina-  
tion, antecedent to Faith, can never constitute them  
a Church, or make them the Body of Christ. But  
these three Nations, previous to the League and  
Covenant were constitute Churches, groaning and  
wrestling to get rid of the Man of Sin, and all the  
Corruptions of the Romish Church, both as to  
Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government;  
which was the Occasion and Rise of their entering into  
a Solemn League and Covenant, as is evident from  
the Preface thereof.

2dly, He says, *This Church Covenant established  
Communion upon such a Footing as divided the Mem-  
bers of the visible Church from one another.*

I Answer. The Solemn League and Covenant, if  
its main Design be rightly understood, viz that the  
Honour of God be preserved inviolable to all suc-  
ceeding Ages, in all Things that concern Truth, Ho-  
liness, and Righteousness; Then it can be no Mean of  
dividing, but rather of cementing more strongly  
the Members of the visible Church, who are of one  
Heart and Way in the Lord, *Jer. xxxii. 39. And I  
will give them one Heart, and one Way, that they may  
fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of  
their Children after them.* And if Malignants  
and Haters of Reformation, who will not  
have Christ to reign over them, be debar'd from  
Church Communion, and State Privileges by them,  
let them blame their Malignancy, and not the Co-  
venant. As for its being a Church Covenant, I do  
not understand how this Notion of the Author's will  
so well suit therewith, especially, in the Sense of the

Independents, (tho' even they approv'd of, and forwardly swore the same, as appears from Mr. Philip Nye's Speech to the Parliament of *England* upon that Head) it being not *simpliviter* Ecclesiastick, but rather a National promissory Oath, required and imposed by the Legislative Power on the Subjects of those three Nations. (1) To maintain and defend all the sacred Concerns, the Rights and Privileges of the Church of *Scotland*, in opposition to all Encroachments thereon, and in this respect it may be accounted the Nations' Oath of Allegiance to the Prince of the Kings of the Earth. (2) To bear faithful and true Allegiance to the supreme Magistrate, in the Defence and Maintenance of the former, together with the Subjects Liberty, and likewise to preserve the Nations Freedom and the Privileges of the Parliaments. And in this Consideration, I humbly think, it hath the Force and Nature of a Civil Law, as well as that of a sacred Bond, and affects the Civil Politick Body, as well as the Ecclesiastick, and will be indissolubly binding on them through all Generations, while there is any Vestige of either.

3. And lastly, He says, *It mixed in the prophane World into the Communion of the Church.* Answer, 'Tis true, at the first Administration thereof, the Sectarians in *England* presumptuously went in with it, and swore it, who as soon after perfidiously brake it, contemptuously threw it off, as an antiquated thing; and thus vilely reproach'd it. I acknowledge it to have been the Fault of some of its Administrators to admit any thereinto, who gave not sufficient Evidence of their good Disposition to the Work of Reformation, sworn to therein: But must the Faults and Mismanagements of some Administrators, render the Covenant it self, either as to Matter or Form, an evil Thing? Surely it ran cross to the very Tenor thereof, to admit the Prophane thereunto, when it expressly excludes such; yet whatever was the now quarrell'd Disorder herein, the Lord was most graciously pleas'd to Seal it with  
the

the Conversion of many Hundreds, if not Thousands, as an incontestible Evidence of his gracious Approbation thereof; moreover the Matter thereof being previously binding, as moral positive Duty, upon all under whatever Character, may excuse for the peremptory Impositions of it. But to conclude this head, I find Mr. *George Gillespie*, one of the eminently zealous Promoters of Reformation, in these covenanting Days, obviating the like Clamor, in his useful Case concerning Associations, thus;

“ If any known Malignants, &c. hath been received either to the Covenant or Sacrament, without Signs of Repentance for their former Malignancy and Scandal (such Signs of Repentance, I mean, as Men in Charity ought to be satisfied with) ’tis more than Ministers and Elderships can answer for, either to God, or the Acts and Constitutions of this National Church. I trust all faithful and conscientious Ministers have laboured to keep themselves Pure, in such Things: Yea, the General Assembly hath ordained, that such should be suspended from the Lord’s Supper, till they manifest their Repentance before the Congregation.” See Act debarring of Persons accessory to the unlawful Engagement from renewing the Covenant, &c. *Edinburgh, 6th October, 1648*, and the Explanation thereof, *Edinburgh, December 4th, 1648*. I think this may sufficiently exclude what the Author hath alledged in this last Clause.

Upon the 3d Head of his Distinctions, he says, “ The Church or Commonwealth of *Israel*, had three standing Offices in it, suitable unto the earthly, but typical Nature of it, *viz.* Prophet, Priest and King, all of them Ecclesiastick Officers, &c.”

*Answer*, This appears so contrary to the very Letter of the Scripture, that the Kings of *Israel* as such, were Ecclesiastick Officers, needs little further Confutation, then *1 Sam. xiii. 9, 10.* And *Saul said, Bring hitber a Brunt-offering to me.*

and <sup>r</sup>Peace-offerings. And he offered the Burnt-offering, And it came to pass that as soon as he had made an End of offering the Burnt-offering, behold, Samuel came, and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him. &c. See verse 11. 12, 13, 14. 2 Chron. xix. 11. And behold, Amariah the Chief Priest is over you in all Matters of the Lord; and Zedabiah the Son of Ishmael, the Ruler of the House of Judah, for all the King's Matters: also the Levites shall be Officers before you. Deal courageously, and the Lord shall be with thee for good. Where was this Ecclesiastick Officer during the Theocracy before Israel sought to be like the Nations by requiring to have a King? 1 Sam. viii. 5. It hath been made evident above, that the Church and State of Israel were not the same; but were formally distinct, in respect of their Policies Ecclesiastick and Civil. We find some of their Kings were Prophets and Penmen of some Part of the Canon of Scripture, and were eminent Types of Christ, and in that regard may be said to stand under a peculiar Relation to Israel considered as a Church; But as they were meerly Kings, they related them, as a civil Politick Body. And whatever Power they had about sacred Matters, such as the Christian Magistrate hath in the New Testament Church, yet in sacred Things, they properly had none. (2ly,) We never read that any of them did officiate in the Priestly Office, except in a way of Usurpation. 2 Chron xxvi. 16. But when he was strong, his Heart was lifted up to his Destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the Temple of the Lord to burn Incense upon the Altar of Incense, &c. See verses 17. 18. I humbly apprehend, that such Godly Kings, as are said to be Typical of Christ, was with respect to their extraordinary Endowments, and not so much in reference to the naked Regal Dignity, tho' in a right Sense, I venture not to exclude this neither, and I am the more inclined to think so, because I find the Lord reckoning Israel's asking a King, to be a rejecting of him

him, 1 Sam. viii. 7. *And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the Voice of the People in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not Reign over them.* Lastly, If all the Kings of Israel were Church Officers, and so Types of Christ, then it will follow, that all of them that fell away to gross Idolatry, and other multiplied Abominations, behoved to be so too, which to maintain, were a most gross Absurdity, horrible to every sound Christian.

The second Thing I take notice of upon this Head he says, *He, viz. Christ, is the only thing like the King of Israel, in the New Testament Church; and if one of the Earth be there, he is no otherways there, then as a Believer in Christ, and a Subject to him, and whatever Power he has in the Common-wealth, and over every Member of it, whether Church Member or not, yet has he no Kingly Power in the Church, &c.* Answer, 1. This fairly implies, that Civil Magistracy is of no Use to the Christian Common-wealth or Church.

2dly. This effectually evacuateth all such Promises, as are made to the New Testament Church of righteous Government and Rulers, as one of the great Benefits of Christ's Government therein, such as *Isai. i. 26. I will restore thy Judges as at the first, as if he said, I will restore them, as in the best Times, whether of Moses or Joshua, David and Solomon: and thy Counsellors as at the beginning; Afterward thou shalt be called the City of Righteousness, the Faithful City.* (3.) As it is contrary to the Word of Promise, so it contradicts the Judgment of all our sound Protestant Divines, both Foreign and Domestick, as is clear from the several Confessions of the Protestant Churches; namely our old Scots Confession, *Article 24.* holdeth out to us, "That to Kings, Princes, Rulers and Magistrates, doth appertain the Conservation and Purgation of Religion;" so that not only they are appointed for civil Policy, but also for the Maintainance of the true Religion, and for suppressing Idolatry and Super-

Superstition, &c, see also 3<sup>d</sup> Art. of 23 Chap. Westminster Confession, more full upon this Point, and which is subscribed by all the Ministers of this present Church. So that it looks very strange to me, that any Member of this Church, so very obsequious and loyal to the Civil Magistrate, should denude him of all Manner of Power in and about the Church, so contrary to the professed Principles and Practice thereof. And I cannot omit to observe a manifest Inconsistency between this Author's Principle and his Practice in this Point. I wonder how he can at any Time, with Peace of Conscience (according to this his Principle) sit a Member of the Supreme Judicatory of this Church, which the Supreme Magistrate convokes, adjourns and dissolves in his own Name and Authority. Again, how can he with a safe Conscience obey the Appointments of the Supreme Authority, for Diets of Humiliation and Thanksgiving, with the Causes thereof, and this acclaimed by, and ultroneously delivered up to the Supreme Magistrate as his Prerogative? How can he swear Oaths in our present circumstantiate Condition, so repugnant to Presbyterian Principles, such as Abjuration, Allegiance and Assurance, imposed by the Civil Authority on the Ministry of this Church, under Pains of Deprivation from Office and Benefice, in the Case of Recusancy? All which Particulars yielded unto by the Author, not only overthrow his own Judgment in this Point; but, if it were proper here to evince, he practically extendeth the Power of the Civil Magistrate, in Matters Ecclesiastick, far beyond the due Limits thereof, to the great Grief and Scandal of many godly throughout the Land, and Espousers of covenanted Principles, who interpret these and the like Cedings to be a yielding up Christ's Headship, with the intrinsic Power of his Church, into the Hand of the Supreme Magistrate. Indeed all Power in and about Things which are intrinsic, belonging to the Soul of Man, such as dispensing the Word and Sacraments

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raments, the Power of the Keys, &c. is refused by all Covenanting Presbyterians of the Church of Scotland, to belong to the Christian Magistrate; because these in their Nature, End and Use, being meerly Spiritual, are of Ecclesiastical Cognizance, and only entrusted to the Office-bearers of the Church, by Christ her sole Head and King. But on the other Hand, The Civil Magistrate, as he is *Custos & vindex utriusque tabulae* hath Power, and is bound to keep all his Subjects by his Authority, within the Bounds of External Obedience to the Law of God, and to punish with external Punishments, the external Transgressions of that Law: This being morally binding, even upon Heathen Magistrates, how forcibly more binding must it be upon the Magistrate when Christian, to exert his utmost Power, Care and Vigilance, that all his Subjects, whether considered as Members of the Church, or of the State, live godly, righteously and soberly, and bear down all Sin against the first and second Table within his Dominions, and thus not only to conserve Justice, Peace and Order in the Commonwealth, and in the Church as it is therein; but likewise to take special Care of the Conservation of the true Reformed Religion, and the Purgation of it, when, and wherein it needeth to be reformed. The Power and Duty of the Civil Magistrate is clearly exemplified in the Person of the Royal Psalmist from *Psalms* ci. and especially from 8 Verse. Another notable Example we have in *Artaxerxes* an Heathen King, *Ezra* vii. 23, 26, 27. worthy to be followed by all Christian Princes. This doth not infer any Usurpation of Christ's Crown and Prerogatives, nor any Encroachment upon the Rights and Privileges of his House; but only denotes the Christian Magistrate's Subserviency in the Church, in employing his Power in his eminent Station, to promote the Mediator's Interest in the Christian Commonwealth, as all Christians in their several Stations are indispensibly bound to do, according to the Rule,

*Coloss.*

*Colos. iii. 17. And whatsoever ye do in Word or Deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving Thanks to God and the Father by him.* And this is utterly remote from bringing in any earthly Power into the Church, or investing the Civil Magistrate with that Power, which Christ hath lodged in his Church-officers, according to this Author's Sentiments.

In the last Place, This Stripping of the Civil Magistrate of all Manner of Power *circa sacra*, in the Church, favours rankly of the damnable Doctrine, if not of Church, yet of State-Toleration, strongly contended for by all such, as are of Sectarian Principles, and is most destructive to the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus, with Abhorrence to be rejected by all that truly love the Welfare of Zion, the Peace and Prosperity thereof: The espousing and pleading for this Principle is a proclaiming Licence, yea an open Invitation to all the Emissaries of Satan, to vent what Hellish Blasphemies they please in the Church, without Fear of Controul, under the Pretext, that therein the Christian Magistrate's Power hath no Place. Neither can the Christian Magistrate's bearing down the Devil's Kingdom, in suppressing Idolatry, Error, Heresy, with all other Abominations in the Christian Commonwealth, and his punishing them under that Formality, as they are deadly Crimes, and hainous Violations of the Holy Law of GOD, and most pernicious to the Welfare both of Church and State, wherein they come to be tolerate, be constructed a promoting of Christ's spiritual Kingdom, with external Force, and carnal Weapons; but a Defending and Maintaining the valuable Interests of Religion in the Church, and a Hedging about, and Fencing the Lord's Vineyard, from the Breaking in of the Foxes, that seek to spoil her Vines, Psal. ci. 8. Cant. ii. 15.

Upon the fourth, and last Head, he says, *The Old Testament Typical Church was Earthly, an Earthly Kingdom, &c. And again, For in the Earthly Jerusalem*

lem were the Thrones of Judgment, the Thrones of  
 the House of David, &c. I answer, Tho' all this,  
 and what he further adds here, be utterly extrane-  
 ous to our Covenants, and deserves to be disdain'd,  
 as either through Ignorance or Malice, impertinently  
 applied to our solemn League and Covenant, for  
 furthering his Aim and Design: Yet I shall, in the  
 first Place, observe from the Words of that Clause,  
 viz. *For in Jerusalem were the Set-Thrones of Judg-  
 ment, &c.* that there was a Two-fold Government,  
 formally distinct under the Old Testament Dispensa-  
 tion, and is fairly implied in, and founded on the  
 Words, contrary to this Author's Notion of that  
 State. (1.) One, in the Church, imported in the  
 Words, viz. *For there are Set-Thrones of Judg-  
 ment,* denoting Ecclesiastical Judicatories. (2.)  
 Another in the State, as the subsequent Words clear-  
 ly imply, viz. *The Thrones of the House of David,*  
 denoting the Civil Government, and the Duty in-  
 cumbent thereon, viz. That it was the Duty of the  
 Civil Magistrate to employ his Power for the Fur-  
 therance of Church-Government, and the Courts  
 thereof; as the last Verse of that cxxii. Psalm,  
 whence the Words cited more plainly show: *The  
 Words are, Because of the House of the Lord our  
 God, I will seek thy Peace.* Whence may be learn'd,  
 That it is the incumbent Duty of every true Lover  
 of the Lord, not only inwardly to affect, but by all  
 warrantable Means effectually to endeavour in his  
 proper Place and Station, to promote the Good of  
 the Church; That is to say, Every true Member  
 of the Church, whether in the Capacity of Magi-  
 strate or Subject, must contribute his Aid to have  
 Religion established, God's Ordinances obeyed, his  
 pure Worship erected, his Word truly preached,  
 the Sacraments rightly administred, and the Dis-  
 cipline of his House duly exercised, according to his  
 Word. Which Portion of Scripture appears so far  
 from founding any Scruple in Prejudice to the Duty  
 of solemn Covenanting, for the Defence and Secu-  
 rity

rity of the True Religion in a Christian Commonwealth, that it seems rather to import, if not a Necessity, yet a manifest Warrantableness thereof, and may be improv'd as a strong Plea, both for the Lawfulness and perpetual Obligation of our Covenants.

In the 2d Place, I find him careful to inform his Reader of the Nature of the New Testament Church, both upon his first Head, defining it thus; *It consists not of any earthly Kingdom, or many Commonwealths joined in one; but of a Society gathered out of all Nations into one in Christ, with the Spirits of just Men made perfect, &c.* And again, upon this 4th Head thus; *It is a spiritual and heavenly Kingdom, &c.* I must confess I am somewhat nonpluss'd to fathom him upon this so very general and abstract Description; But so far as I can comprehend, he appears to me, (1.) To abolish all gradual Difference betwixt the State of the Triumphant Church above, and the Church Militant here. (2.) He seems at least to overlook, if not tacitly to reject the Distribution of the Militant Church into invisible and visible. I own, he makes Mention of the Church as visible, and decipheres who may be accounted proper Members thereof; yet his Description, notwithstanding, seems to carry in it, a confounding the one with the other. (3.) He seems to overthrow the Distinction between Christ's external Government in his Church, exercised in the Dispensation of the Ordinances of his Institution, and the Power of the Keys, and his internal Kingdom seated in the Souls of all effectually called, confining Christ's Kingdom to this only: And if so, this fairly strikes against the organical State of the visible Church upon Earth. If I have mistaken him in this Particular, I willingly yield to Correction, my Aim being not to wrest his Words, but to vindicate our Covenants from the detestable Infamy thrown upon them by his Letter, so far as my small Light into Reformation Principles doth reach, which, such as it

is, is not owing to my spiritual Guides, but merely to the Lord himself; wherefore I judge my self called and obliged to hold, vindicate and defend the same, in my Place and Station, against all Opposition or vile Reflection on, and Defection from the Blessed Reformation, sworn to in our Covenants, even to suffering unto Blood. Moreover, I cannot forbear to say, That this Author has fallen upon no commendable Device, to wound the Interest of Religion, in these covenanted Lands, through the Sides of some of these Truths he has abused, in adducing them the better to impress his weak and credulous Reader with Jealousies of our Reformation, as a Thing destructive to Christ's spiritual Kingdom, as a little below will barefacedly appear. Will he have the Immodesty to insinuate, That the burning and shining Lights of our Reformation did not well understand the spiritual Nature of Christ's Kingdom, or its Excellency above the Old Testament Dispensation? Any illiterate Countryman, taught in the Word by the Spirit, may see and say as much, and far more to this Purpose, than he hath said, from 2 Cor. iii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. and from 16th Art. of the old Scots Confes. and 25th Chap Westminster Confes.

In the last Place, Upon the Conclusion of this fourth and last Head, he speaks out after a most contemptible Manner, saying, *Why turn we again to the beggarly Elements, &c.* That our Covenants and sworn to Reformation therein is plainly meant in these Words scurrilously applied, is undeniably evident from his Words immediately following, which he delivers thus; *But in these Covenants, and the State of the visible Church arising thereupon, I see nothing but a pitiful Shadow of the earthly Church of Jerusalem.* I think I have too good Ground here of crying out in the Words of Jeremiah the Prophet, *Be astonished, O ye Heavens at this, be horribly afraid, &c.* Jer. ii. 12.

Now, Reverend Sir, I leave it to you, and every tender Christian, to judge, whence doth flow such

such strange like Accusations, so freighted with intolerable Contumely? Doth this favour of a Gospel Spirit? Is there any Thing like the Image of Christ, or Fruit of his Spirit here? What further and higher Indignity can he cast upon the covenanted Reformation, upon all the zealous Wrestlings, faithful Witnessings, and grievous Sufferings of its Assertors than this? Do all the Pieces of the attained to Reformation, since the Dawning thereof in Famous Knox's Day to 1650, amount to no more than *beggarly Elements*, or a re-building of an Old Testament Oeconomy? Is the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government of the Reformed Church of *Scotland*, renowned among the Reformed Churches for the Purity and Thoroughness of her Reformation, and called by them the Morning Star of the Reformation, now found to be nothing but the old Temple Service, and the abrogate *Judaism*, or rather a *pitiful Shadow thereof*, reared up again? Were all our Reforming Ancestors (eminent for Godliness and Zeal, and Learning too) in all their vigorous Wrestlings, and sore Travail to promote our blessed Reformation, from all the Idolatry and Adulteries of the *Romish Whore*, a Set of Criminal *Judaizers*, Seducers, Soul-murderers, and Enemies to the Advancement of Christ's Spiritual Kingdom? Were all our Martyrs and Sufferers unto Blood for their faithful Adherence to, and defending of that Covenanted Cause, deluded and demented Self-murderers, both the one and the other worthy of Death by the Law of God and Man, and their Persecution in the most cruel, barbarous, and inhuman Manner, and Acts thereof, most justifieable and lawful? All these and many more such like frightful Inferences, are natively deducible from the several odious and false Charges adduced against the Covenants by the Author of this Criminal Letter. And for further Proof of this, I collect them in the Order, wherein they stand in his Letter. As (1) upon his 2d Head, he holds them out as *earthly Covenants, made in Imitation*

tation of the old Sinai Covenant, and brought into the Church as a Foundation of Church Communion, cross to the New Testament-Dispensation, and bringing the Disciples again under the Yoke of Bondage, and therefore by all Means to be avoided. Again, they blended the Church and Common-wealth, they divided the Members of the Visible Church from one another, and mixed in the profane World into the Communion of the Church. (2) Upon his 3d Head, He charges them with bringing in earthly Power into the Church. (3) Upon his 4th Head, He condemns them as legal, earthly Covenants, that go not upon the pure footing of the New Testament-Dispensation. And in his 8th Scruple, He says their Tendency is to lead Men from the Foundation God hath laid in Zion, the only Corner Stone in it. And lastly, In the close of this 4th Head, he scornfully vilifies them, as beggarly Elements, and a pitiful Shadow of the old earthly Church of Jerusalem. Which Heap of Calumnies are not the Breathings of a sound Protestant Presbyterian of the Church of Scotland; and the Indignity thrown upon these Sacred National Covenants by these Calumnies, is nothing inferior to their Treatment, when burnt at the Cross of Edinburgh, by the Hands of the Hangman, and a plain Justification of that Heaven-daring Action.

If by our Covenants any Points had been set up or established, not founded on the Word of God, derogatory to, or encroaching upon the Royal and Legislative Power of Christ the Head, binding the Conscience, where he left it free; such as the Observation of Days, Months and Times, the Hierarchy, Superstition, blasphemous Supremacy, and significant Ceremonies of the Corrupt Church of England, who retain in their Constitution no small Portion of the old Temple Service; then there had been some Bottom laid, for founding the foresaid Charges: But there is not any one Thing engaged to in our Covenants, that is not in itself moral Duty, previously binding on us by the Law of Christ. And

And to say, that a solemn engaging of our selves to these Duties, is a *bringing us again under the Yoke of Bondage, cross to the Gospel, and leading us off from the Foundation God has laid in Zion, &c.* and hereby to loose us from all Obligation to them, is at least interpretatively to make Christ (*absit blasphemia*) the Minister of Sin, and the Gospel a licentious Dispensation; Absurdities too gross for Lawless Anomians, or ranting Antinomians to assert. *But we have not so learned Christ, as not to stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,* Gal. v. 1. and to seek and endeavour by all just Means to preserve, maintain and defend our Spiritual Liberty, and even in a Way of mutual Covenanting, through Faith's Relyance on our Covenant-Head, in Opposition to such, as use all Fraud, Force and Craft to reduce us under the Yoke of Bondage; as likewise our Civil Liberties, in a Subordination to that which is Spiritual; is the undeniable Duty of every Christian, in no sound Sense repugnant to, or interfering with the Gospel Covenant, as it is in the Author's Account; when branding our Covenants with the *stigma of legal earthly Covenants*. Whether he receive it or not, be it known to him, that all sincere and upright Covenanters do respect them only, and accordingly endeavour through the Grace of Christ to pursue their Performance, as the Nations vow, and Oath to the great God of Heaven and Earth, to hold fast the new and better Covenant, as the Churches Charter, for the whole of the Blessed, Heavenly and Glorious Inheritance exhibited therein, and conveyed thereby, to hold the Lord Jesus as the Head, Mediator, Surety and Testator thereof, yea to hold him Head in all Things belonging to the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government of his Church, and to be the alone Attoning, Teaching, and Governing Head thereof. This is the grand and chief Trust committed to the Church, and to every, yea the meanest Member thereof. And is it not then a Duty incumbent on Christian Nations,

tions, whether as reformed, or wrestling to advance Reformation, to come under a National Vow and promissory Oath of Fidelity, as a superadded Tye on them conjunctly, to maintain this Trust inviolable, to which they were severally bound by their antecedent Baptismal Vow. Now Reverend Sir, I humbly judge, that whosoever they be, that essay to loose us in these covenanted Lands, from the binding Obligation of these indissolvable Bonds, from which no Power on Earth can Absolve, or to excite and provoke any to abandon them, by reason of such direful Representations, under which they are held out unto us, by this most unaccountable Letter, can be accounted no less then Treason against Zion's King, and Treason against all the Laudable Laws establishing our happy Reformation. Doth not this Letter in express Terms tell us, that our Covenants are by all means to be avoided, *as beggarly Elements?* Is not this avowedly to teach us to renounce our covenanted Allegiance and Loyalty to our Lord Jesus Christ, the sole Head and King of his Church? Is not this to teach us the highest Rebellion against God, and a causing such as listen to, and are carryed off by these Delusions, to trust in a Lie? I am sorely afraid, as he has acted too too like the Practice of *Hananiah* the false Prophet, Jer. xxviii. 15, 16. *And Shemaiah the Nehelamite*, Jer. xxix. 31, 32. *Send to all them of the Captivity, saying, Thus saith the Lord, concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite, Because that Shemaiah hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, and he caused you trust in a Lie: Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will punish Shemaiah, the Nehelamite, and his Seed: He shall not have a Man to dwell among this People, neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my People, saith the Lord, because he hath taught Rebellion against the Lord.* So he has too apparently served himself obnoxious to their Doom; which I heartily pray, that the surpassing Mercy of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may speedily prevent, by granting him

Repentance to bewail the Reproach cast upon the Cause of Christ, and Word of his Testimony, the Hurt and Injury done thereunto by him, not easily repairable in our Day of lamentable Back-sliding, wherein our Covenants ly broken, contemn'd, and burried by all Ranks of all Denominations, and shamefully by us professing our selves Presbyterians. Whence is it *that Iniquity runs down as a mighty Stream*, Damnable Errors and Heresies, such as Arianism, Quakerism, Popery, Arminianism, abjured Prelacy, Freethinkers, who will not admit the Word of God as their Rule to regulate their Thoughts by, with other multiplied Abominations, making the Earth groan under its Inhabitants? Is not this chiefly owing to the laying aside our Covenants, and our unanswerable Neglect to pursue their Ends? During the vigorous Prosecution of which, our Church was Beautiful as *Tirsah*, comely as *Jerusalem*, terrible as an Army with Banners. But O! how are we fallen, all of us fallen from our first Love, fallen from the Zeal and Faithfulness of our renowned reforming Ancestors, into a detestable Indifferency and Neutrality, abjured in our Solemn League and Covenant, and into the strictest Confederacy and Friendship, by an incorporating Union with the stated Adversaries of the Cause and Covenants; which I can no otherwile construct, then a fearful Conspiracy against Christ, *by so prophaning the Covenant of our Fathers*. Mal. ii. 10. *Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every Man against his Brother, by profaning the Covenant of our Fathers?* See Verses 11, 12. What can be the procuring Cause of all the Distress that is lying upon us, both in our Spiritual and Temporal Estate, is not our National Wealth fast consuming, and our Poverty daily fast abounding? Is not the Life and Power of Godliness at a very low Ebb among us, through the withdrawing of the Comforter, that should relieve us? Is he not greatly withdrawn from our publick Ordinances, from  
our

our publick Ordinances, from our Families, and our Closets? Is not the Spring of all this, if we would allow our selves to see, *because we have Robbed God, even we this whole Nation?* Mal. iii. 9. *Therefore the Crown is fallen from our Head.* Lam. v. 16. *Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned: Renew our Days as of Old.*

*Rev. Sir,*

I send you this as my Testimony against, not only the Reproach cast upon our Covenants, National and Solemn League by this *Rabshekah*-like Letter, but likewise against all the Violations of, and Wrong done to this honourable Cause, tho' now every where spoken against (a despised Remnant excepted;) by all our Back-slidings and Defections therefrom both as a Church and State, ever since the Year 1650, to this present Day: Again as a Declaration of my Espousing of, and Adherence to the Principles of our Reforming Forefathers, from the Days of Mr. *Knox*, to 1649, so far as I have attained unto the Knowledge and Understanding of them: Which yet is but small, having now lived the most of my Time in great Ignorance that way, as many more in our Day do, through Want of publick Instruction. *Lastly*, My hearty Approbation of the Covenants National and Solemn League, and the Reformation sworn to therein, as the undoubted Cause of God; also of all the Wrestlings, Contendings, and Testimonies of the Sufferers, either in the Fields, upon Scaffolds, or otherwise.

*Rev. Sir,*

Although I have already answered (as I humbly conceive) the Substance of this Author's eight Scruples, in my Animadversions upon his four Heads of Distinction; yet I have essayed to consider them separately, with all the Brevity I can. Indeed it would exceed the Bounds of many Sheets, to trace

him narrowly in every Particular: Therefore I shall touch at what I judge most Material.

His first Scruple then is, *He findeth no Warrant in the New Testament, nor any Shadow of Ground for these Covenants, &c.*

I Answer, These Covenants binding us to nothing, but what concerns *Truth, Holiness and Righteousness*, as hath been already proved, to which all the Hearers of this Gospel are previously bound, by the Law of Christ, how can it be unwarrantable for Christian Common-wealths, that have come under the Vows of God in Baptism, (that Ordinance of Initiation into his Church) solemnly to avouch the Lord to be their God, and themselves to be his People, and vow Fidelity in all the Concerns of his Glory: which to deny, is to cast off the Law of God, and his supreme Authority, as our only Lawgiver, and consequently to render the New Testament Dispensation lawless and licentious, licensing Christians to live as they List, under Pretence of an imaginary Faith; as Multitudes of Latitudinarians dream, especially among the ranting Sectaries; than which, nothing can be more gross and impious. Moreover, this Assertion carries in it a Dissolution of the very Ligaments, both internal and external, that tye the Church, which is the *Body*, to Christ the Head; the Churches Relation to Christ her Head inferring Covenanting in its very Nature, I forbear to descend into the many choking Inferences of this unhappy Assertion. I affirm our Covenanted Reformation well warranted from the New Testament. 1. From our Lord's own exemplary Practice, *Mat. xxi. 12. And Jesus went into the Temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the Temple, and overthrew the Tables of the Money Changers, and the Seats of them that sold Doves. See Verle 13. Mark xi. 15. And they came to Jerusalem: And Jesus went into the Temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the Temple, and overthrew the Tables of Money Changers, and the Seats of them that sold Doves*

*Doves.* See Verses 16. 17. *Luke* xix. 45, &c.

2dly. From the Law Moral in the Hand of Christ, as the Instrument of his Moral Government, in his Spiritual Kingdom, eternally binding upon all his Subjects, as a Rule of Duty. 3. From our Lord's reprehensory Charges to several of the seven *Asiatick* Churches, *Rev.* ii. and iii. Chapters. 4. From other various Places of Scripture, a few of which I shall now mention, which may serve sufficiently to confirm this Truth. As 1. *Phil.* i. 27. *Let your Conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ. Stand fast in one Spirit, with one Mind, striving together for the Faith of the Gospel.* In which Text, these Things are noticeable. 1. Here is a collective Body, if not explicitly, yet implicitly confederate, exhorted by the Holy Apostle. 2. The Duties exhorted to, are Zeal for, a firm Adherence and standing to the Truth, a joint striving and contending together for the Preservation, Maintenance and Defence thereof against Error. The Word *Striving* in in the Original is emphatick, importing a *Fighting* in and for the Faith. 3. There is a threefold Unity exhorted to, only competent to a confederate Body, and the very same with that expressed in our Solemn League. 1. An Union in Spirit, or Judgment and Opinion. 2. An Union of Mind, or Affection. 3. An Union of Design or Endeavour, *striving together.* All which considered, confirm the Warrantableness of our Covenants by the New Testament, both as to Matter and Form, even to a Demonstration. Many others may be adduced for further Confirmation of this Head, as *Jude* 3. *Behold, when I gave all Diligence to write unto you of the common Salvation: it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints,* *Rev.* iii. 1. *And unto the Angel of the Church in Sardis, write. These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven Stars, I know thy Works, that thou hast a Name that thou livest, and art dead.*

Heb. x. 23. *Let us bold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering (for he is faithful that Promised.)* See 2 Tim. i. 13. Whence I conclude what is the indispensable Duty of each Member of the visible Church, severally considered, as pertaining to the common Cause of Religion, must be no less the Duty of the whole conjunctly considered. Finally, Is it not foretold by way of Promise under the Old Testament, that diverse Nations under the New-Testament shall confederate with the Lord and excite one another this way, *Isa. ii. 3. And many People shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his Ways, and we will walk in his Paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Isa. xlv. 4. Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh Righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: Behold, &c. Isa. xix. 18. In that Day shall five Cities in the Land of Egypt speak the Language of Canaan, and Swear to the Lord of Hosts: one shall be called the City of Destruction.* See Verses 23, 24, 25. *Jer. l. 4, 5.* In which Prophecies, I dare not doubt, but that the Lord had a special Eye to the Isles of *Kittim* and *Shittim*. And the Covenanting of these Nations in the Cause of Christ was no despicable Implement of these Prophecies.

Again, he says *It is likewise very strange, that when the Discipline of the Church was most pure, in the first 300 Years, there was not the least Appearance of these Things.* I Answer, 1. If it was not formally and explicitly so, it was so materially and implicitly. 2. The Case of the Church now in a more settled and constitute State, varies very vastly from the State of the Church, in her first Gathering and Plantation; for in that first Gathering Period of the Church, she was suffering under the Discountenance, Opposition, and Persecution of the civil Authority, where no such Opportunity did offer. 3. Neither

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is the Rule, as to the Gathering and first Plantation of Christian Churches, and the Purging of the Churches already constitute, and more universally settled, the same. Churches may be said to be gathered out from among the Heathen, as the Apostles gathered them in the first Plantation of Christian Churches, or out of false heretical Churches, as our first Reformers, raised up of God, gathered Churches out of the Antichristian Romish Church. Then the Rule is, *Come out from among them my People,* 2 Cor. vi 17. Rev. xviii. 4. But if a Church, confessed to be a true Church, tho' labouring under various Corruptions, whether in Doctrine or Manners, &c. then the Rule is, *Purge out the old Leaven, put away from among you that wicked Person.* A Church is not to be gathered out of a true Church, groaning under felt and confessed Corruptions, and wrestling for Reformation, after the Manner and Practice of the Independents; but to be reformed, wherein she is corrupted, or by casting out such as are Incurable, and do obstinately Outstand, and wilfully and maliciously oppose Reformation, In Agreement to Scripture Rule, and our Covenants founded thereon.

His 2d Scruple, He says, *They are Church Covenants, yea, the very Terms of Church Communion, &c.* Having handled this Point already upon one of his Heads, I answer shortly, It is denied, that they are Church Covenants of Formation, giving Being or Essence to a Church, as the Independents dream; but for Reformation according to the Word, and for Conservation of the Truth, in opposition to Blasphemous and Heretical Enemies. Can this be the Reason why our Author shews so much Teeth and Anger against them? But let him know that all that are Members of Christ's visible Church, altho' our Covenants had never formally existed, are bound by the *second Command, to Receive, Observe, keep, Pure and Intire all God's Religious Worship, and Ordinances, as he hath appointed in his Word;* and whoever, after  
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this Author's manner, malign our Covenants, they do throw off the Authority of this Divine Law, to their own Peril.

*Object.* " Christ is the great and only Magistrate in the Kingdom of God; he is the *Dominus fas totum*, to whose Hand this Work of Reformation is committed. Thus Mr. *William Dell* an Independent, Chaplain to *Grul Fairfax* in his Sermon upon right Reformation." I Answer, 1. This is a glorious Truth, our Lord Jesus is the All of his Church, the Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption thereof, and she is to hold him Head in all Things, her Attoning, Teaching, Conquering, Quickning and Governing Head. And this grand Truth, the Maintenance of which chiefly our Covenants do bind us to, and for which our Reformers have all along strenuously contended, and all our Martyrs have sealed with their Blood, nay, their best Blood, as Christ's particular Word of Patience, committed in Trust, to be faithfully kept by the Church of *Scotland*, in opposition to abjur'd Prelacy, and Blasphemous *Erastian* Supremacy, which is a most wicked and Sacrilegious Robbery of Christ in his Glorious Prerogatives. 2. Yet our Lord Jesus carries on this blessed Work by Means, and Instruments of his own Appointment. Yes says Mr *Dell*, by his Word and Spirit, and what Covenanter denies this? Was it not by and according to the Word, our Reformers sought the Advancement of our covenanted Reformation, and that in Faith's Dependence upon the Holy Spirit of Promise. 3. Hath not our Lord instituted in his Church the Keys of Discipline and Censure also, for reducing, correcting and reclaiming of his backsliding People, either when falling, or fallen into Sin, to which they are so lyable in this State, both (of Falibility and Mutability)? 4. It is a strange Mistake and odd Dream to imagine, and then say, that every Christian in these Covenanted Lands, in his proper Sphere and Station, pursuing the Duties of the

the Covenants as a Means to their appointed End, is an Usurpation of Christ's Prerogative and Office of regenerating and sanctifying his Church. This is so ridiculous, childish, and pitiful, that it deserves rather Commiseration; than Confutation. I have enlarged the longer here, because I am apprehensive our present Author has adopted Mr. *Dell's* Sentiments of Gospel Reformation, which he opposes to what he calls Political and Ecclesiastick Reformation, confounding at least subordinate Means and End.

His Third Scruple says, *By the Covenants, especially the solemn League, the Visible Church of Christ is enlarged beyond the Limits that Christ hath set; because a visible Unbeliever might, and many such did actually take these Covenants.* I answer, Why is the Covenant condemn'd here, for the Fault either of the Taker or Administrator? Will this Quarreller venture thus to impeach the holy Ordinances of Baptism, and the Supper, upon the baptizing of Children of grossly ignorant Parents, yea malignant and prophane, or upon the Admission of such Scandalous Ones to the Holy Communion, not impracticable in this Day? Again, I ask, whether or not is it the bounden Duty of all that hear the Gospel in these Lands, to believe, and to practise the Duties contained in these Covenants as the Fruit of his Faith? Or will his Unbelief exempt him from the Obligation of Duty he owes to God and Man?

Again he says, *That by these Covenants the Visible Church is straitned, &c.* This is most injurious and false: The Solemn League gives a fair Invitation to all the Sister Churches, either to enter into this or the like Combination, for the like End and Purpose. The Solemn League excludes none, but such as through their Malignity, will not have Christ to Reign over them; or such as oppose the Civil Government as founded on, and regulated by the Word of God, and hereby it proves a notable Mean to discover the malignant Enemies both of Church and State.

State. Again under this Head, *I find the Author snarling at the Uniformity, &c. in the Covenant as a Mean of walking together as Brethren in Love.* To shun the Enlargement here, that this Point would require, I shall in short Remark. (1) That the Author appears to me to adjoin such, as gainstand publick Standards or Confessions of Faith. (2) The New Testament doth amply press this Unanimity in many Places thereof, more particularly *Ephesians iv. Chap.* is remarkable to prove this Point. (3) Is not this Uniformity essentially and absolutely necessary to the New Testament, as well as the Old Testament Church, and without which she cannot subsist? Finally, is not Unanimity in the Matters of God promised as the great and signal Mercy of the Kingdom of Christ, *Zeph. iii. 9. For then will I turn to the People a pure Language, that they may call upon the Name of the Lord, to serve him with one Consent,* or as in the Original, *with one Shoulder*; whence may be gathered, that Purity of Doctrine and Worship doth not consist in a Lawless Liberty, or Toleration to invent and vent what Men will and please; but is conjoined with, and carried on by an united Uniformity, which, as it is the Rich Fruit of much Trouble, so it is to be expected in the Lord's Time and Measure, *Jer. xxxii. 39. And I will give them one Heart, and one Way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their Children after them. Zech. xiv. 9. And the Lord shall be King over all the Earth; in that Day shall there be one Lord, and his Name one.*

His Fourth Scruple says, *The Solemn League deprives all such as cannot take it, not only of Church Communion, but of State Privileges.* I answer, That all malignant Enemies to the Welfare and Prosperity of a well constitute Church and State, that labour to undermine, and seek the utter Subversion of both, do most deservedly, both by the Law and Testimony forfeit the Privileges of both (*solenni fœdere*

*now existents aut obstante*) this is also consonant to the Law of Nature in all Communities.

His Fifth Scruple is so childish and impertinent to the Point in Hand, that I pass it as undeserving of Notice.

His Sixth is a most gross Falshood, and the very Reverse of the Scope of our Covenant, as hath been proved above ; but what's further noticeable here, I shall hint at under the following Scruple, which is,

His 7th Scruple, in which he says, (1) *These Covenants, in the Way wherein they were entered into, were a Mean of mixing the prophane World with the visible Church in Scotland, England, and Ireland, and so they did in great Measure destroy the Distinction between the Church and the World, &c.* I answer, were it a Verity, what is here alledged, without the least Probation ; yet not the Covenants, but rather the Ordinances, whether of State or Church imposing them without due Limitation, would be herein culpable : But our Covenants being our solemn abandoning of the whole of the intolerable Antichristian Yoke, (as has been hinted at above) so long wreathed on the Neck of our Forefathers, I can see no Room, giving Place to such ill Natured Scruples, and far less of any Foundation for this here, seeing the Solemn League expressly abjures Prophaness. But if our Author mean by *the prophane World*, Saints in outward Profession, eydencing their Faith by a Walk correspondent thereto, (as probably he doth, in agreeableness to Independent Principles, which cut off all from Church Communion, save such as can utter in Discourse the Breathings of the Holy Spirit, and Experiences of Conversion) then it is yielded all such were received into the Covenants ; which is no less warrantable than to admit them to the Participation of the Seals of the Gospel Covenant, it being a Presbyterian Principle, not to shut the Door the Lord hath opened to the Hearers of the Gospel, and which do profess the Faith thereof, not

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to exclude, such the Lord hath not excluded. (2)  
 He says, *It was a Means of avoiding Persecution,*  
*&c.* Answer, I see no Cause, why lawful Means are  
 not to be used for avoiding or preventing Persecu-  
 tion, if God's Glory in the Conservation of the  
 Truth of the Gospel, (which was the primary End of  
 the Covenants) be reached thereby; but the Ques-  
 tion is, whether did our Covenants prove to be  
 such a Means, as this Scrupler supposes? I an-  
 swer, The former and latter Abjuration of them, with a  
 Servile Submission to, and a voluntary Walking af-  
 ter the Commandments of the Subverters of our  
 covenanted Reformation, prov'd rather this Mean of  
 evading Persecution; whereas a firm Adherence to  
 our Covenants, became the Mean of a most cruel  
 and bloody Persecution, nothing inferior to the  
*Spanish* Inquisition, which is yet recent in the Me-  
 mories of not a few at this present Day; which is  
 a clear and confirming Evidence, that the Covenants  
 and Reformation sworn to therein, is the Lord's  
 Cause; because of the universal Hatred of Worldlings  
 of whatever Denomination against it, which Effect  
 could never fall out, if our Covenants had been  
 founded on Carnal, Legal, and Political Principles,  
 then the wicked and carnal World had never made  
 such Opposition to them; or if the erecting and pro-  
 moting the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in  
 these Lands, had not been their main and chief De-  
 sign, (which all along since the coming of Christ,  
 has proven the Mean of Persecution, Contention, and  
 War, through Satan's Malice, and Men's En-  
 mity against Christ, that cannot endure his Throne  
 to be set up in a Place through the Preaching of his  
 Gospel, *Matth. x. 34.* Then why such Rage of En-  
 mies of all sorts against them? Has it not ever been  
 the Design, and always the Endeavour of the Popish,  
 Prelatical and malignant Faction, to raze them and  
 their Adherers from off the Earth, *Psal. ii. 1, 2.* Were  
 they not persecuted, and still continue to be so  
 by the Sectaries, prophane Worldlings, and even by  
 many neutral luke warm Professors of our Day,  
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belching out their Raileries, and false Accusations against them, and such as own and stand by their Obligation; so that it is plain, they have never ceased to be the Object of Persecution. And lastly, Has not even this Author join'd in with the black Roll of the foresaid Persecuters, both by Tongue and Pen, vilely to condemn this honourable and blessed Cause; and that under the Colour of Gospel Zeal, which would incline such as retain the Sense of our Covenant Obligations, to apprehend him some *Romanist* in Sheeps Cloathing, agencing the Cause of *Rome*, breathing out his angry Resentments at our secession from that Synagogue of Satan, with our Renunciation of all her Corruptions and Abominations, as abjured in our Covenants. But whatever be the Ground of his Indignation at them; yet they are our Father's Covenant, binding both materially and formally on us their Posterity, during any Remains thereof; and his lying Fictions will never free him, or us, either from their Obligation, or from the dreadful Vengeance of their Contempt and Breach, *Ezek. xvii. 15. But he rebelled against him in sending his Ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him Horses and much People: Shall he prosper? Shall he escape that doth such things? Or shall he break the Covenant, and be delivered?* See *Ver. 16, 18, 19.* And when the just Lord ariseth to make Inquisition for the Bloodshed in Defence of, and for Adherence to these Covenants, such Delusions as this angry Author takes his Sanctuary in, will prove a very fenceless Refuge; The Disrespect wherewith these Covenants are treated, and the Indignity cast upon them in our degenerate Day, loudly cries for the Lord's speedy avenging their Quârel.

3dly, Upon this Head he says, *But it ruined the Hedge of true Discipline, and defiled the Church, &c.*  
*Ans.* This is another saucy Accusation, loading the Reformers with detestable Laxness, in their Admission of Church-Members, whose contrary laud-

able Strictness this Way is still to be seen in their Church Records till the Year 1649. It seems this Author must be a Stranger to the Procedure of these two famous and faithful Assemblies of the Church of Scotland 1638, and 1639, which did purge the Lord's House in these Lands of all *the Thieves and Robbers, Buyers and Sellers*, that had been abusing his House to Merchandize; or else he must be strangely Brow-beaten, even to insinuate any such Charge against these Worthies, whose Memory will be fragrant in the Church of Christ to the End, for their great Faithfulness and burning Zeal, to have the Mediator's Throne set up, and established in these Lands, and that by entering into solemn Covenants, as a Mean most conducive hereunto: But I looking upon the Author here personating an Independent, (in which Shape he appears to me sometimes to cast up, tho' far exceeding the more pious and modest among them, in his malignant Insults upon our covenanted Reformation) would soberly enquire, Whether Independents or Presbyterian Covenanters were most grossly guilty of mixing in the profane World with, and so dreadfully corrupting and defiling the Church? Which of these Parties opened a wide Door to the crowding in of the heretical, blasphemous, and filthy Sectaries. See Mr. *Thomas Edward's Gangrene*, or Catalogue of their Errors, Heresies, Blasphemies, dedicated to the Honourable Lords and Commons assembled in *Parliament* 1646; and thereafter received them into their Aid by a Military Association, to promote their Conquests over the Presbyterians of these Lands, contrary to their Faith plighted in the Solemn League; as may be gathered out of Mr. *William Dell's* Preface to his Sermon upon *Right Reformation*, (this Man was then Master of *Gonvil and Caius* College in *Cambridge* 1651) triumphing thus; *Thou Independency, thou fairest Form, the most beautiful Face the Sun hath looked upon, thou art Rachel, thou hast with great Wrestlings prevailed and brought forth*

forth Gad, a Troop, thou hast routed, pursued, and taken. And what this Troop he thus glories in, was, I know not; if it was not the Tribe of the pestiferous Sectaries, that then fill'd and poison'd the Land, and overspread these Lands with a lamentable Deformation: So that the Lord's People adhering to the Lord's covenanted Work, never had any good Ground to relish the Independent strict Discipline, or boast of their Reformation, when taking in, and sheltering such a spurious Brood under their Wings, to the entire defiling of the Church, and utter Subversion of the happy Reformation; which, if duly maintain'd, according to the Oath of God upon us, had proven, and would still prove a more proper and effectual Mean to preserve the Purity of the visible Church, and its due Distinction from the World, to the Honour and Glory of Christ her sole Head and King, which a lawless Toleration, either in Principle or Practice, neither can nor shall ever attain. I would seriously ask this Accuser, Whether is it owing to his lax tolerating Principles, renouncing our Covenants, or to covenanted reforming Principles, that Popery is spreading through all Corners of the Land, especially under his Northern Climate, Prelacy tolerate here, and established in *England* and *Ireland*, with which he has sworn a Confederacy, contrary to *Isa. viii. 12*. To which of these is owing the prevailing of Error, the abounding Impiety, and avowed Profanity in City and Country, with a *Form of Godliness*, among a great Number, *without the Power thereof*? I dare say it, without Fear of transgressing the Bounds of Christian-Charity, that this Guilt will be found lodged within the Skirts of either Neutral or Anticovenanting Principles, such as this Author has espoused. But I pass to his last Head.

Lastly, He says, 1. *The Things that he found attending these Covenants at this Day have given him some Disgust thereat.* Answer, What these Things are, he leaves his Reader to conjecture to be some

of the Sectarian Tenets he has vented in the Body of his Letter, which do sufficiently testify to us, not only his (some) disgust; But something that too nearly smells of Heart Rancour at them. If our Covenants, as to Matter, Form and End be lawful, and well warranted by the Word of God, in the Old and New Testament, the compleat Rule of Faith and Practice, as indisputably they are, with all such as are found in the Faith; then how unreasonable is it, if not impious, to take up a groundless Disgust at them, and to send forth such an evil and unfavoury Report of them to the World, as this Author hath done, to the gladning the Heart of the Daughters of the *Philistines*, and filling their Mouths with Laughter? Has he not performed a fine Piece of Generation Service, by his thus reproaching the Lord's Work, and his People's Zeal for, and faithful Adherence thereto, and consequently vindicating all the Heaven daring Violations thereof.

2dly, He says, *For the Covenants have a Tendency to lead off Men from the Foundation God hath laid in Zion, by joining other Things, however lawful in themselves, as a Term of Church Union and Communion.* Answer, That the prime Subject Matter of the Covenants, is the Truth of the Glorious Gospel in all its Branches to be received, held pure, and entire, together with the Duties of the first and second Table, to be faithfully walk'd in, as the genuine Fruit of the Faith of the Gospel, hath been already sufficiently cleared; and to say this tends to lead Men off Christ, is so nauseous an Assertion, that I am afraid it will be found deservedly to land under the Character of the Doctrine mentioned, 1 Tim. iv. 1. *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter Times some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils.* And all that own the binding Obligation of these Covenants, can entertain no other Construction thereof: Besides, if Faith and Holiness, be not the only Terms

of Church Union, and Communion: I know not else what can be so.

2dly, He says, *And so I find those of my Acquaintance, that are zealously affected, slighting the Preaching the Cross of Christ and the Appearance he makes in his Ordinances, &c.* Answer, 1. This unjust and false Reflection, is thrown upon all such, as are tender of their Vow and Oath to God, and withal study to keep at all due Distance from all such Snares, and Compliances, as may involve them in the guilt of Perfidy and Perjury, either by their Approbation of, or going in with, and defending such Courses, as they can noway reconcile with their Covenant Obligations. 2. When Ministers fall into Gross and Scandalous Defections, which they maintain and defend to be their Duty, in this Case, whether is it the People's Duty to approve of, and tamely follow them, or withdraw from and avoid them, as Users of Division and Offences contrary to the Doctrine they had learned, Rom. xvi. 17. *Now I beseech you, Brethren, mark them which cause Divisions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.* Doth not the Spirit expressly enjoin us to withdraw from every Brother that walketh disorderly? 2 Thes. iii. 6. Now if the Case be such with this Author, or others in his Category, will he load Obedience to these Divine Injunctions, with the grievous Charge of slighting the Preaching of the Cross of Christ? It is very likely this Gentleman has sworn the Oaths of Abjuration, Allegiance and Assurance to the Government; which Thousands through the Land are perswaded of these following Particulars: 1. That they infer at least an interpretative Abjuration and Renunciation of the covenanted Reformation of the 3 Kingdoms, Scotland, &c. 2. A solemn Approbation and Ratification of the sinful Union of Scotland and England: 3. A Solemn Engagement to maintain and defend the Government of England and Ireland, whose Constitution is Prelatick, both in Church

and State; yea, the whole of that anticovenanted Hierarchy, which is the Grave Stone at this Day upon our Sworn to Reformation. Now let the Author reconcile these Causes of Division, with our Covenants, otherwise he acts the Part of *Joseph's Mistress*, throwing his Sin upon such as refuse to partake with him therein. How will he and others answer for it to the Lord one Day, for precluding his Peoples Access to the Ordinances of his Appointment, without Offence, by blocking up their Way through multiplied Stumbling Blocks? Any of the Lord's, offended Little ones, can roundly tell him, that their *withdrawing from such as cause them to err* like unto this Covenant persecuting Author, is no disrespect to the precious Ordinances of Christ; but to the Wrongs done to his blessed Cause in these Covenanted Lands, now avowedly defended by this Author.

4ly. *And the professed Subjection*, I think he meansighting the Subjection, of Poor Sinners unto the Gospel of Christ, where Zeal for those Covenants are wanting.

Answer, *Qualis Rex, talis Grex*, such Pastor, such Flock. What a pitiful Character does he give us here of his Converts he boasts so of, for Liveliness, otherwise; and is not this the sad Fruit of his highly censurable Unfaithfulness to the Lord, and the Souls of the poor People under his Charge, so much seduc'd with his Sectarian Delusions on that Head?

5ly, He says, *And I find them cool about the one in their Zeal for the other, yea, however much they declare against a Legal Spirit, some I believe, from their Consciences; but many ignorantly, and many upon Party Views and Designs; yet something of a Legal Spirit prevails with this Zeal, with those of my Acquaintance, &c.*

Answer 1. His declared Principles with respect to our Reformation, and the Indignities he has thrown upon the Memory of the Renown'd Promoters there-

thereof thereby, have given sufficient Ground to all such, as regard the Oath of God, binding on these Lands, not only to be *cool*, but to stand at the greatest Distance from him, with his Adherers, while adopting and maintaining such dangerous Principles, as would involve these Lands in the blackest and deepest Perjury. 2. 'Tis not the Reproach of the Lovers of the Covenanted Reformation, but their Glory, to retain, and maintain their due Zeal for his Work, notwithstanding of the Legalness wherewith this Author doth stain it. The Faith of true and upright Covenanters has ever been attended with a holy, fervent Zeal, to have the Lord Jesus magnified in his threefold Headship over his Church, and that Faith wherewith this Zeal is not accompanied, is justly suspected to be a Faith not of God's Operation: *For the Zeal of the Lord's House eateth me up*, hath been in some good Measure, the just Characteristick of all the *Followers of the Lamb*, in all Ages of the Church, and most conspicuously of our Godly reforming Ancestors, witnessed in their cruel Sufferings, Witnessings, and Wrestlings against the Wrongs done to, or Usurpations made upon any of Christ's Meditorial Offices. Here I must advertise him, that in Opposition to our now Damp of Neutrality, whether this Royal Headship of his be held fast in all Things or not, an Hair or Hoof of which our faithful Martyrs would not part with, even to the Effusion of their Blood. 3. It is not to be thought strange, to find him representing the Poor despised Successors of these Worthies, who are aiming in a backsliding Day, to go forth by the Footsteps of that blessed Flock, *Cant i. 8.* as Legalists; when he so daringly ventured to arraign, judge, and sentence their Cause as *Legal, Earthly, Cross to the New Testament*, &c, as the Fruit of his Mystick Notions, he has imbib'd, but especially his Regal Dignity. There are yet to be found some Ministers in this Church, certain of which I have the Honour to be

acquainted with, who have a large Acquaintance with the Gospel Revelation, both as to Experience and Theory, who retain a honourable Regard to our Covenants, and whose Grief and Burden I charitably judge it is, *That whatsoever is commanded by the God of Heaven, is not diligently done for the House of the God of Heaven, for preventing the Wrath hastning, upon these Realms; at whose Feet, it would be no Disparagement to him to sit down, for his better Instruction in Gospel Misteries, for the Expulsion of his Mysticism, destructive to, both Law and Gospel.*

6thly, He says, *As for what you say upon the Head in your Letter anent Covenanting in Christ's Strength, with looking for Acceptance through him, it makes nothing to you as to his Righteousness, the Foundation of the Church, and its Union and Distinction from the World, &c. Answer,* Wo's me, were all that noble Cloud of Witnesses gone before us, no more then a Pack of Ignorant and Blind Idiots in this Author's Account, who knew not Christ to be the Foundation of the Church, and chief Corner Stone in it, his Righteousness to be their only Right, and Title to all and each Blessing of the everlasting Covenant, and Faith, to be the taking Possession of this Right and Title? I ask this pert Judge, doth not the Faith that submits to Christ's Righteousness really subject also to the sweet and easie Yoke of his Government? Doth not this Evangelick Grace breathe after a full and perfect Conformity to Christ the living Head of the mystical Body, after a Perfection of Holiness, as the Perfection of Happiness? And will this Author put on the Arrogancy to insinuate that Faith was not at the Root of all our Reformers Contendings, for advancing the Mediator's Glory, to the Honour and Glory of God the Father? Or, Is this Faith, *which teacheth us to deny all Ungodliness, and worldly Lusts, and to live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present World, and maketh Zealous of Good Works, Tit. ii. 12, 13, 14.* inconsistent with  
the

the Believers Covenanting Duty, out of Love and Gratitude to God for Christ his unspeakable Gift, who is his Righteousness for Acceptance, and Strength for Performance, which is the chief Thing our Covenants holds out to us? Which to deny doth in my View infer gross Libertinism.

6thly, He says, *I find likewise a Spirit of Bitterness, unsuitable to the Gospel of Christ, attending this Zeal.*

*Answer.* This Reflexion gives occasion here, for using the common Proverb, that this is like Satan rebuking Sin; this Challenge comes ill off this Gentleman's Hand upon the back of so many bitter Invectives against our Covenants, with Insinuations so highly Reproachful to the Memory of our reforming Ancestors, which he might be sure, could not shun to raise the Indignation of all such, as cleave to the Lord and his Cause, warmly to resent the insolent Affronts he hath cast thereon, most unbecoming the Spirit of the Gospel; and if he imagines that the Spirit of the Gospel is the Parent of his blackning Accusations, he grossly mistakes this *Hagarene Offspring*. When the Eyes of his accused are opened to see him, or any of his Associates, betraying the Lord's Cause and his Followers out of Reformation Principles, 'tis no Wonder, they testify their Indignation against this, in such a Stile as the Apostle expresseth, *Phil. iii. 2. Beware of Dogs, beware of evil Workers, beware of the Circision. v. 3. For we are the Circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, &c.* How far this may be allowable to others, I determine not; but sure I am, he has taken the Liberty, to use an uncommon Latitude, to vent (what he calls Self) this way, as the Evidence of a very antievangelick Spirit: O that some would learn first, *to take the Beam out of their own Eye, before they see the Mote in their Neighbours.*

7thly, And lastly, he says. *And another Thing that is offensive to me, is, They being led by this Zeal unto unchristian Principles about obeying the Civil Magistrate, in paying him Tribute, and professing Al-*

legiance to him as the Civil Magistrate, and acknowledging his Rights to Govern, notwithstanding his Difference in Religion, to which we are bound by the Command of Christ, &c.

*Answer* 1. It is most certain, those he condemns here, are no Enemies to God's lovely Ordinance of Magistracy, tho they refuse to befriend the Corruptions thereof, or approve of the Investiture of any therewith, wanting the elective Properties or Scriptural Qualifications necessarily requisite to that high Office, *Exod. xviii. 21. Deut i. 13. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3.* 2. Grant them this one Thing, that their Reforming Ancestors sought and pleaded for, *viz. Let the Magistrate give Christ his due Place, and then they will down with all Things else at his Feet.* See written Proceedings of Assembly 1638. 3. The Church and State of England shamefully condemns our Author's lax Principle herein, with all the Adopters thereof, who will not admit any to the Princely Authority, who enters not thereinto, by the Door of Prelacy, and is not of that Communion. This is acting more consonant to a Principle, than that our Author is willing to incline to, who can tamely submit to any Magistracy whatsoever, yea tho' making Encroachments upon the Rights and Privileges of Christ's House, or usurping the Supremacy thereof. 4. His accused here, are condemned by him for holding fast the old Protestant Presbyterian Principle of the Reforming Church and State of Scotland, with reference to this Point, seeking to have the Magistrate entering into the Exercise of his Princely Authority, by the Door of the Covenants, which were and still ought to be held the Conditions of Government, and the very Foundation of our Nations Compact with their Sovereign, at his Inauguration. (5) Whenever they can either find or obtain the Magistrates coming under the formal Tye of our Covenants, according to that good Act of Parliament, "February 7. 1649, That the Prince shall by *et* and attour his Coronation Oath, assure and declare

"clare by his Solemn Oath, under his Hand and  
 "Seal, his Allowance of the National Covenant,  
 "and the Solemn League and Covenant, his Oblig-  
 "ation to prosecute the Ends thereof in his Stati-  
 "on and Calling, &c." And according to the Assem-  
 bly's Declaration and Warning that same Year, and  
 put in Practice at the Coronation of *Charles II.*  
 then in Consistency with reforming Principles, and  
 their Faith plighted in these Covenants, they will  
 most heartily prostrate themselves at the Magistrates  
 Feet, to obey him conscientiously, and cheerfully  
 maintain and defend him with their Lives and For-  
 tunes. (6) It was a beautiful Branch of our Glori-  
 ous Reformation, that the Civil Government of the  
 Kingdom of *Scotland*, was modelled agreeable to  
 the Word of God; and that the Right of the Regal  
 Government therein, was constitute, bounded, and  
 fixed by an unalterable Law, consonant to the said  
 Word, and sworn to be inviolably preserved, both  
 by Kings and People, as is undeniably evident from  
 the above cited Act, and from the Coronation-Oath,  
 contained in the 8th Act, *Parl. 1. King James VI.*  
*Edinburgh, December 17. 1567. See Collection of Acts,*  
*Page 507, in the Confession of Faith, Reprinted at E-*  
*dinburgh 1725. Which Coronation Oath holds forth*  
 to us, (1) *That the King was bound to be both by*  
*Profession and Practice, a true Protestant Presbyterian,*  
*and to serve the Eternal God, to the uttermost of his*  
*Power, according as he hath required in his most Ho-*  
*ly Word, and to maintain the true Religion of Jesus*  
*Christ established in Scotland, and sworn to by Co-*  
*venant, to be preserved pure and incorrupt, both by*  
*King and People, 1580, 1651. (2.) That the King*  
*shall Rule the People committed to his Charge, ac-*  
*ording to the Will and Command of God, revealed*  
*in his foresaid Word, and according to the laudable*  
*Laws and Constitutions received in this Realm, no*  
*ways repugnant to the said Word of the Eternal God.*  
 (3.) *That the King shall procure to, and preserve the*  
*Peace of the Church and State, to his uttermost Pow-*  
 er,

er, and shall be careful to Root out of his Empire, all Hereticks, and Enemies to the true Worship of God, that shall be convict by the true Kirk of G. d, of the foresaid Crimes. Whence it is clear, as the Sun Beams, that the Supreme Magistrates just and legal Right to sit on the Throne of this our ancient Kingdom of Scotland, is principally founded on, and regulated by the Word of God, formally constitute and established by Laws and Solemn Covenants, to stand fixed and unalterable to all succeeding Generations. Now seeing the Regal Right to govern in this covenanted Realm is thus constitute, circumscribed, and unalterably fixed by the best of Laws, strongest Bonds, and inviolable Oaths; Let us then examine, which Party, in this circumstantiated Case, whether our Author, and his Conjuncts, departed from, and counteracting this important Point of our happy Reformation, contrary to all the Laws of the Land establishing the same, and the awful Oath of the Covenants binding on this Land for ever, on him and every one in it, to hold fast this, and all other Pieces of the attained to Reformation, inviolable to all After-generations?

Or, Those whose study Adherence to our ancient and reformed Constitution, he loads and blackens with unchristian Principles; be most worthy of this black Charge of practising unchristian Principles?

In the last Place, This Author's lax and unsound Principle on this Head, overthrows all the human Security, the Civil Government can lean to, by making Oaths and Covenants, as it were only binding to serve a Turn, and Posterity nothing concerned therein.

Whereby may be learned, what poor Security the present Government hath from Men of such loose Principles, notwithstanding of their multiply'd Oaths, so often reiterate to the Government: Who, upon the prevailing of a Popish malignant Faction in Britain, bringing in and placing on the Throne a Popish Pretender, would exclaim against, and reproach

proach all such who refuse to own and acknowledge his Right to govern, to subject to him, to pay him Tribute, profess Allegiance to him, notwithstanding his Difference in Religion, with being Guilty of Unchristian Principles, and counteracting the Command of Christ, because they cannot in Conscience violate their Faith, plighted in the Oaths of Abjuration, Allegiance, and Assurance sworn to the present King and Government. He openly avows here, what a sorry Regard he bears to Oaths and Solemn Covenants, and their binding Force, when he plainly tells us, that the Practices of these who firmly stand to their Father's Covenants, Oaths, and Vows, refusing under whatsoever Hazard or Peril, to break, desert, or abandon them by sinful Compliances with anticovenanting Principles and Practices, are in his Opinion, a Discredit to Religion. This Man's Way of Speaking would incline his Reader to look on him as another start up *Machiavel*.

## P O S T S C R I P T.

R. S.

**H**AVING underwent the Toil of considering and writing to you my Thoughts upon that scandalizing Letter, brought to my Hand from your Corner; I could not neglect to make my Remarks upon the Postscript thereof, containing some un-sound, obscure, and indigested Notions, near of Kin to the Letter.

*First, it says, God by the Covenants he made with the Nation of Israel of old, became an Husband thereby to many, who had not the Law written in their Heart, &c.*

*Answer (1.)* What these Covenants were, founding this Relation between God and *Israel*, it leaves undetermined. *(2.)* If by the Covenants therein, be meant the *Sinai* Covenant, as it would seem it is, because made with *Israel* as a Nation; and if  
so;

so, then this infers, that the People of *Israel* was under no such Relation to God, antecedently to the making of this Covenant, and consequently not a Church, nor his Spouse. (3.) But it is plain, they were a long Time previous hereunto, under the Covenant of Grace, which was at first revealed to *Adam*, *Gen.* iii. 15. and more fully to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, *Gen.* xvii. 7. *Gen.* xxvi. 3. *Gen.* xxviii. 13, 14. Called Covenants of Promise plurally, because of its frequent Repetitions, as further and clearer Illustrations thereof, which were but one and the same Covenant substantially, and was the prime Rise of that highly dignifying Relation resulting thence between God and his People.

2dly, It says, *But he has said*, *Jer.* xxxi. 31.—34. compared with *Heb.* viii. 7.—13. *He would make a New Covenant with Israel*, i. e. *The Spiritual Israel*, his Church, gathered out of all Nations, &c.

*Answer*, I would gladly understand, Whether the *P. S.* understands this to be spoken of the New Covenant, as contradistinguished from the *Sinai* Covenant, which was a Divine conditional Grant of Blessings, upon perfect Obedience required in the Law of *Moses*; or if it was in Contradistinction to the *Abrahamical* Covenant; that it was to the former, it is granted: But it is absolutely denied, that it was said in Opposition to the latter, otherwise this would inevitably infer two diverse Covenants of Grace, and that the Old and New Testament Church were not saved by one and the same Covenant as to Substance.

3dly, It says, *I say a New Covenant, by which, to whom he would be an Husband, should* (1) *Have his Law written in their Hearts.* (2.) *Know him.* (3.) *Have their Sins pardoned, and be justified.*

*Answer* (1.) This seems to confound the Covenant, with respect to its Declaration, Appointment, and Offer, exhibiting Christ, with all his Benefits in the free Promise, as the Sinners only Happiness, to be freely taken, and possessed, with that

of the actual Execution, and effectual Application: Or thus, it seems to confound what is called *jus ad rem* & *jus in re*; That is to say, the Gospel Hearers Right to take, possess, and use, what the free Promise giveth him Right to, with that of actual personal Possession.

(2.) It seems to cut off the visible Church's conjugal Relation to God; by admitting of no other Relation to him; but that which is internal, and only peculiar to the Regenerate. Or it infers, that Christ, or God in Christ, can in no Sense be said to belong to Sinners of Mankind, to whom he is declared, and offered, previous to actual Application of him, contrary to *Jona ii. 8.* *John vi. 32, 33.* *Acts ii. 39.* (3.) It makes void the Use and End of the sealing Ordinance of Baptism to the Visible Church, charging the Lord of appending his Seal to a Blank. Hence these following Queries, to which I would desire a Satisfactory Answer.

*Query 1mo,* Have not all *put on Christ, who are baptized into Christ,* Gal. iii. 27. and consequently must be within the Covenant, and that of Grace, either externally, or internally?

*Quer. 2do,* Are not all visible Professors, who have given their open and declared Consent to Christ, whose Hearts have not yet closed with him externally, tho' not internally, married to him, and so in Covenant with him?

*Quer. 3tio,* If the visible Church, or visible Professors therein were not in Covenant with Christ, and married to him; how could their departing from him be called Adultery, and themselves called Adulterers, and Adulteresses? One that is not really married to a Man, her Whoredom cannot be called Adultery.

*Quer. 4to,* If visible Professors were not in Covenant, and married to Christ, how can they be said to fall totally and finally from Grace, or liable to *sin the Sin unto Death?* Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. I

*John* v. 16. which the Regenerate are secured from, who tho' they may fall partially, and for a Time, yet cannot fall totally and finally from Grace.

*4thly*, It says, *And that he will not make such a Covenant again, as he made with the Nation of Israel of old.*

*Answer*, Seeing that our blessed Lord Jesus, our glorious Cautioner and Surety, has actually come in our Law-Room and Stead, and by his perfect doing and suffering, has answered the End of that *Sinai* Covenant, made with *Israel* as a Nation, in fulfilling it as the legal Condition of the Covenant of Grace; there will never then be any further Occasion, or Place for making again any such Covenant with any.

*5thly*, It concludes, saying, *Whence some conclude, that our Covenants National and Solemn League, are without Warrant.*

*Ans.* How this Conclusion is inferable from the above Premises, betwixt which there is not any conceivable Affinity or Relation, I'm of the Mind would puzzle any sound expert Divine to find out: But I am sure, who ever is the Author hereof, if he be not bemisted, and leaven'd with the unsound and dangerous Notions of the Author of the Letter, condemning our Covenants, he must be strangely mistaken of the Nature, Scope, and Intendment of the *Sinai* Covenant, when he runs the Analogy between it and our Covenants, National and Solemn League, so exclusive of that legal Dispensation.

*6thly*, It brings in for a Reason of the foresaid, *viz.* *If they were authorised by God, he should again become an Husband to many, who have not his Law written in their Hearts.*

*Ans.* It is an unanswerable Verity, that there is an external, federal, and conjugal Relation betwixt Christ and the visible Church, all and every Member thereof, and hence called *Branches in him*, *John* xv. 3. And the Churches covenanting Duty

to Christ her Head, is the Effect, and not the Cause, either impulsive or efficient of that Relation.

Finally, It closeth up all thus, *But such a Covenant, he hath said, he would not again make.*

*Ans.* 1st, If the *Sinai* Covenant be meant here, who will contradict the *Postscript* in this Particular, and what Victory over our Covenants doth it gain hereby? 2dly, Either to think or say, that the Lord doth not warrant his Church to covenant dutiful Obedience to him, is just in plain *English* to say, the Lord Jesus will have his Church to be a rebellious, undutiful Spouse to him; which is the grossest of *Libertinism* with a Witness, entirely destructive of the *Baptismal Covenant*, as well as of our *Covenants, National and Solemn League.*





# APPENDIX.

**S**OME Interval of Time after this Letter had been finished, and transmittted to the Gentleman concerned, there were several Sheets sent to me, from a New Profelyte of the Author of the Letter, slandering the covenanted Reformation of these three Kingdoms, viz. Scotland, &c. the Contents of which were an accusing our Reformation, in several Points, of Antichristianism. I did not regard this, as proceeding from this new Convert, for several Reasons, both unnecessary and improper to be here insert: But finding that one of them had been penned by that Anticovenanting Author, engaged me to take this Controversie under further Consideration, notwithstanding what is further insisted on in them, is already answered, upon the Matter, in the above written Letter; this Gentleman understanding this, sent me a Letter; The Tenor whereof follows.

Sir.

*Since you have at present under your Consideration, some Particulars of the Papers I sent you last, I have thought it necessary to put you in Mind, that you have no more to do, but to illustrate from the New Testament these two Particulars, 1. That 'tis according to the Mind and Will of Christ, that his New Testament Church or People, endeavour to bring themselves to Holiness, or Reformation, by their own vowing or covenanting under a Promise and Curse: 2. That 'tis according to the Mind and Will of Christ, that his New Testament Church and People endeavour Reformation nationly by the Sword of the Civil Magistrate*

gistrate, and by earthly Power, or the Power of the Multitude. If you prove these two, you gain the Point; win them, and you win all, lose them and you lose all.

Sic subscribitur,

Whence I premise these Remarks. 1. That this new Sect appears convincingly to me to lay aside the Old Testament from being any Part of the Rule of Faith, especially of Duty to the New Testament Church, which this Gentleman's precise Restriction obviously insinuates, tying their Antagonists solely to the New Testament for Arguments to refute their enthusiastick Assertions. This is further clear from the Words of the Author's Letter, who Heads this Sect, saying, *And as for the Old Testament, and what is adduced from thence, for these Covenants, I think it glorious, and manifests it self to be Divine, in its Spiritual Accomplishment in Christ, and his Spiritual New Testament Church; for when we turn the Old Testament to the Lord Christ, the Vail is taken away, &c.* Which Words to me imports this much, That the whole of the Old Testament, even the Moral Law it self, as it is an eternal Rule of Righteousness, was figurative and typical, and therefore, of no more use to the Christian Church, because fulfilled in Christ. Indeed 'tho' it is of verity that he fulfilled it as the Condition of Life for his Elect, yet as true it is, that he destroyed it not as a Rule of Duty to his Church. Now they are blind, that see not the Tendency of this Author's Scheme to be an Introduction and Revival of *Antinomian* and *Anabaptistical* Errors, with a Medley of other Inconsistencies. *Mat. v. 17. Think not that I am come to destroy the Law.---18 For verily I say unto you, till Heaven and Earth pass, one Foot or one Title shall in nowise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled. v. 19. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach Men so, He shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven.* This saying

faying of our Lord looks with a tremendous Aspect upon the present Impugners of our Covenants.

(2.) To reject Proofs adduced from the Old Testament, for warranting the Restraint from such Sins as are not expressly forbidden in the New Testament, and the Performance of several Duties, as are not explicitly required therein, lays a clear Foundation for the Inundation of many execrable Evils to take Wing in the Church without Curb. But to come more directly to the handling of the Particulars restricted to; I answer *1st*, Our Covenants are maliciously misrepresented, and miserably wrested by the foresaid Letter, holding them forth under the Form, that is, according to the Tenor of the old Covenant of Works. *2dly*, I deny that ever it was according to the Mind and Will of Christ, that even his Old Testament Church, far less his New Testament Church, should endeavour to bring themselves to Holiness, or Happiness, either according this Tenor of Vowing and Covenanting. Let this deluded Party prove the contrary to either of these, *and they gain their Point; win this, and win all; lose this, and they lose all.* And this might serve for an Overthrow of the above insert Letter, pitiful at least for Childish Ignorance and Nonsense. And if this new upstart Party have not more able and better intelligent Advocates to plead their Cause, it will quickly disappear with Ignominy.

*Object.* God's Covenant made with Israel at Sinai, was according to this Tenor, *ergo.* Answer, If Israel's personal Obedience, or covenanting to bring themselves to Holiness, had been the main and principal Intendment of that Covenant, then had the Law been against the Promises; but the Apostle, Gal. iii. 21. asketh, *Is the Law then against the Promises of God? God forbid: For if there had been a Law given, which could have given Life, verily Righteousness should have been by the Law.* It was according to the Mind and Will of Christ, that

that the Old Testament Church should covenant Duty through Faith in him the promised Seed, to be incarnate, and to come under, and fulfil that *Sinaitick* Covenant for them, and make the Blessings of the Covenant of Grace sure Mercies to them: So the Moral Law still, as the perfect Rule of Righteousness, and Conformity to the Will of God, binds the New Testament Church perpetually, as the Mind and Will of Christ, not according to the Tenor of the old Law Covenant, but according to the Tenor of the Covenant of Grace, to Vow and Covenant the Duties of Holiness and Righteousness, from Faith in Christ their Covenant Head. *Cessavit Lex, ut est norma operum naturæ, ex formula fœderis operum, manet vero iis qui in Christo sunt, ut est Regula operum Gratiæ, i. e.* The Law, as it is the Rule of the Works of Nature, according to, or under the Form of the Covenant of Works, hath ceased; but to those that are in Christ, as it is the Rule of the Works of Grace, it still remaineth. See *Rollock*, one of our famous *Scottish* covenanting Reformers, (condemned now by this new Sect, with the whole Body of his covenanting Brethren, as a Pack of legal *Judaiizing* Covenanters,) upon *effectual Calling*, Chap. ii. Now let our Antagonists prove the contrary, and they gain the Point: The Duty of covenanting being sufficiently proven by the Reverend Author of the Review, I insist not further on this Particular. *Answer 3d*, These Covenants, as they are the Nations solemn Promise and Vow to the great God, to hold fast the Covenant of Grace in all its Articles, as their alone Security, for the whole of the purchased Inheritance, and through the Grace of the Covenant, to walk up to it, as their high Privilege in all the Duties of Holiness and Righteousness, is utterly inconsistent with the Tenor of the Covenant of Works. And as to the solemn Attestations, and awful Appeals sealing up these Covenants, as they are solemn Oaths, not or-  
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ly to God, but of the Parties covenanting, each to other mutually: And none knowing the Hearts of Men, but God only, no less Solemnity in such like Transactions was necessary to ensure the Faith of the Parties contracting each to other, of their mutual Assistance, and holding hand to one another in the sincere, constant, and faithful Pursuance of the Ends of these Solemn Covenant Transactions: And without this Article of Corroboration and Confirmation, they had been poor unforcible Tyes, giving little human Security from the Party Contracting, viz, The King and People, and the three Kingdoms, with one another, to be relyed on, for reaching their Ends, for the which they were intended, Even real Believers, while in this State of Mutability, liable to grievous Falls and multifarious Faintings and Failings, need to be tyed with the strongest Bonds, especially when Covenanting about Matters of the highest Concern. To say then, that such Covenants as are also promissory Oaths, are legal, and either constitutive of, or bearing Affinity to the Covenant of Works, because of the solemn Appeals and Attestations made therein, so essential to their Being; and therefore unwarrantable to be had in use under the New Testament, is a dangerous Error, near of kin to *Quakerism*. All the Members of the visible Church are under the Law, as a Rule of Duty; which in the Case of Transgression, binds every one thereof to its Sanction, suitable to his respective State; the real Believer to Fatherly Anger in its heaviest Effects, even the forest of temporal Calamities, the nominal Believer to vindictive Wrath, must its Use and Observation therefore be abandon'd by the New Testament Church as Legal, because of its Sanction? God forbid: *Wherefore the Law is Holy, the Commandment Holy, and Just, and Good, Rom. vii. 12.*

*Lastly*, What is said of them, as to Rewards in point of Performance, is either the Effect of Blindness or Malice: If the averting of the Lord's Wrath,  
and

and the Fruition of God's gracious Presence be the Reward here meant; and quarrelled by the Party, our Covenants were made and entered into as a most eligible Mean herunto, no Way repugnant to the Constitution and Order of the Covenant of Grace, containing a certain Connection of Graces, Duties and Blessings. But further, If all that is held out to us under a conditional Form, must be arraign'd and condemned at the Bar of our new Sectarian Judges, I fear the New Testament Dispensation, holding out and offering Salvation to Sinners upon Condition of Faith, *Mark xvi. 16. He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned;* can hardly escape the Censure of a legal Ministration from these Judges; yea every federal Expressure, conditionally held out to us in the New Testament, must fall under the same Condemnation; when the Difference between Condition proper and improper is not admitted:

The next Head is, *That 'tis according to the Mind and Will of Christ, that his New Testament Church endeavour Reformation nationally by the Sword of the civil Magistracy.* To which I answer briefly in the Affirmative; If by Reformation no more be meant, but that which is external, and lies only in the bearing down, and punishing open and avowed Violations of the holy Law of God, and in commanding, encouraging and defending the external Exercise of Religion: And the Magistrate in his high Place and Station, stands bound by the fifth Command, as the Mind and Will of Christ to his New Testament Church, to be eminently active in this Matter, so nearly concerning the Glory of God, *Psal. ii. 12. Kiss the Son, -- Isa. xlix. 23. And Kings shall be thy Nursing Fathers, -- Chap. lv. 5. Behold thou shalt call a Nation, that thou knowest not, and Nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of thee Lord thy God, and for the Holy*

One of Israel; For he hath glorified thee. Chap. ix. 12. For the Nation and Kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish: Yea, those Nations shall be utterly wasted. From which Prophecies and Promises plainly relative to the New Testament Church, it is most evident that whole Nations shall embrace the Christian Faith, and become a Part of Christ's Church, and among the other Benefits confer'd on her, God also hath given all Power and Authority here on Earth for her Use, and that they which will not serve and profit her, shall be destroyed. So then the Defence of Religion by the Sword, is a Duty as indispensibly incumbent on the Christian Magistrate now under the New Testament, as it was under the Old; Seeing that Change of Dispensations can in no wise change the unalterable Truth and Righteousness of God. But to conclude this Head, This new Sect, with their Chieftain, among their other Errors, has espoused and set up for the Doctrine of *Non-Resistance*, and *passive Obedience*, so much pleaded for by the high Church of England. See Burnet's Vindication of the Authority, Constitution and Laws of the Church and State of Scotland, during the bloody Reign of King Charles II. In whose very Dialect this Party speak and plead for this Point, effectually confuted by the True Non-conformist, and *Jus Populi vindicatum*.

I thought it needful to shut up this Appendix with the Illustration of some of the Scriptures adduced by this Author, wickedly perverted and wrested for the Proof of his erroneous Assertions, in Prejudice of our Covenants. The first is, Heb. viii. 6. *But now hath he obtained a more excellent Ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better Covenant, which was established upon better Promises.* From which he states a Contrariety between our Covenants, and the new Covenant, as two Opposites. I have above cleared our Covenants from this Calumny, by holding forth the

Con-

Consistency of Believers covenanting Duty with the new Covenant, only as a special Fruit and Effect of its Execution and Application. This Scripture is strangely perverted, either through Ignorance or Malice: The Scope of which, as also of that whole *Epistle*, is to shew forth the Excellency and Pre-eminence of Jesus Christ his Priesthood and Sacrifice, above that of the *Aaronical* Priesthood, and *Levitical* Sacrifices, and of the Betterness of the new Covenant, above that of the old, in Point of *Remission of Sins*. The second is that, *John xviii. 36. Jesus answered, my Kingdom is not of this World: If my Kingdom were of this World, then would my Servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: But now is my Kingdom not from hence.* The Words, according to the Sense of sound Interpreters, implicate (1.) A Disallowance to draw the Sword in Christ's Defence, in his State of Humiliation, thereby to impede his finishing the Work of Redemption; How then should the Scripture be fulfilled that thus it must be? (2.) An Inhibition to Church-men to draw the Sword, thereby to grasp at, and entitle themselves to such Civil Jurisdiction, and worldly Dignity, as doth interfere with the just Power and Dignity of the lawful Magistrate, or is incompatible therewith. (3.) The *Jews*, and even Christ's own Disciples, fondly and ignorantly imagining, that Christ's donative Kingdom was to be exercised as other Kingdoms of the World are, in outward Power and Splendor: To remove this gross Mistake, and *Pilat's* Suspicion and Jealousie, likely arising thence, our Lord witnesseth and declareth the Quality of it, *viz, That it is not of this World*, and therefore neither can interfere with, nor diminish *Cesar's* Empire and Grandeur; and this he confirmeth by a most plain and convincing Argument, *If my Kingdom were of this World, then would my Servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: that is, if I designed a worldly Kingdom, I would have gathered*

thered Followers, or rather Angels my Servants to fight for my Rescue: But since I imploy no Relief, but willingly give my self unto the Death, now it is plain *my Kingdom is not from hence*. No Disswasive, Restriction, or Inhibition to the Christian Magistrate, can be gathered hence, to defend the Interest of Religion by the Sword, or imploy his Power and Authority for the Advancement thereof, - which reacheth no further than the Defence of that which pertains to the Externals of Religion, and the repelling of external Force by Force, but can do nothing as touching the Conscience, and keeping out of Satan; which is only effectuate by the Spirit of Christ accompanying and rendering successful his own Spiritual Weapons for that end. As to that Scripture *Math. xxvi. 52. For all they that take the Sword, shall perish with the Sword*; it is a Threatning denounced against the traitorous Band come against him (for the Comfort of his Disciples) upon whom it was most dreadfully accomplished; and this is confirmed from *Revel. xiii. 10.* of parallel Application, *He that killeth with the Sword, must be killed with the Sword*. And it is a forcing of the Text to interpret it as a Threatning against the Disciples for drawing the Sword in Christ's Behalf. If *Salus Populi, the safety of the People*, under the Interpretative Notion of *suprema Lex, Sovereign Law*, have in all just Exigencies, in all Ages, amongst all Nations, warranted a defensive Resistance, to whatsoever is destructive thereto, can Religion, infinitely preferable in it self, be thought destitute of this: Prerogative? Which to disallow, is to destroy Nature, deny Reason, contradict Scripture, *Deut. xiii. 11, 12, 13, 14.* and the unanimous Consent of all Nations. Again, If Self-defence, and Defence of Religion by the Sword of the civil Magistrate be contrary to the Mind and Will of Christ, then it had not been warrantable for the Apostle *Paul* to have sued for, or accepted the use of the Sword for his Defence from the *Jews*, who sought to kill him for the Cause of Christ; see *Acts*

xxiii from v. 12 to 25. And if it was the Duty of the Civil Magistrate, when Heathen, to defend him, much more ought the Christian Magistrate employ his Power that Way, viz. to defend the Church with her religious Interests, otherwise she should fall a Prey to the Teeth of her implacable Enemies, such as Turks, Papists, and the like Enemies. Is it because our Lord Jesus employed no Aid for his Rescue from the Jews, doth it therefore follow that all Christians should reject all Assistance and Defence, and deliver up themselves to Suffering after the same Example? Let these Gentlemen understand, if they will, that it is the *manner only*, and not the Act of our Lord's Sufferings that is proposed to us for Imitation.

The 3d place of Scripture abused by this Author and Associates for the Support of their Argument against Reformation by the Assistance and Concurrence of the Civil Magistrate, is the Parable of the Tares.

“ He says, It hath been a prevailing Principle for long, that Hereticks are to be cut off by the Magistrate, and Christ's Subjects have suffered by this Principle more than any other sort of Men. Our Lord foresaw this, and has given in a Caution against it in his Parable of the Tares and the Wheat. *Let both Grow together &c.*” *Mat. xiii.*

Whence I remark 1. That he openly unbosoms himself here in the plain Language of the Sectaries. 2. That he restricts the Meaning of the Tares to Hereticks. 3. I tremble to think of the Reproach cast upon the immaculate Redeemer from his Sense of the Place, as if it had been his Mind and Will, that his greatest and chief Enemies should be tolerate in his Church, tho to the endangering her Corruption and Destruction; and to strengthen this his erroneous Notion, he cites *Luke ix. 55, 56. Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of.---For the Son of Man is not come to destroy Mens Lives, but to save them.* Which Text is plainly expressive of our Lord's Dis-

Displeasure by way of Rebuke to his Disciples for their Desire of revenging of private personal Injuries, and this is intirely foreign to this Gentleman's Meaning of the Words, and Aim thereby: And no Person of common Understanding, (but such as stand not in Aw to abuse and wrest Scripture, to patronise antiscrptural Notions) can gather from that Citation any Allowance or Toleration of Error and Heresie in the Church. And to think or say our Lord gave License or Precept for Toleration of such damnable Evils, appears to me to be above measure Blasphemous, which I tremble to think of. It is a most precious Truth, worthy of all Acceptation, that our dear Lord Jesus came to save both by Price and Conquest Mens Lives; he was manifested to destroy the Works of the Devil in the Hearts and Lives of of his People, but not to save in Sin, or tolerate Sin in them, as *Antinomians* filthily dream. Lastly, From the Abuse of the Sword in the Hand of Corrupt Magistrates, *giving their Power and Strength to the Beast, making War with the Lamb*, Rev. xvii 13, 14. he concludes by refusing it to belong to the Christian and Godly Magistrate, in whose Heart the Lord hath put to hate the Whore, as a partial Accomplishment of Rev. xvii 16. Either defensively or Offensively to endeavour the Advancement of Reformation by the Sword: How this will quadrate with the Text immediately cited, without a false and strained Gloss, the Reader may judge. Having made this Premise, I need make no other Answer, than what a late learned, and Godly Writer in this Church against Toleration, *viz. Mr. James Ferguson, Minister of the Gospel at Kilwinning 11652.* who answers this very same Argument as follows. "Now, say they, *By these Tares is meant Hereticks;* " *therefore they should not be plucked up by the Sword* " *of the Civil Magistrate.* We Answer 1. If they a- " *strict the Word Tares to Hereticks, in this Sense,* " *that the Sword of the Civil Magistrate should not* " *be used against them; by the same Reason they may*

say, that they should not be disputed against,  
 for that is a plucking up of them also. 2. We  
 Answer, That by the *Tares*, that are commanded  
 here to be suffered to grow up to the Har-  
 vest, is no more meant Hereticks than other  
 other scandalous Livers: And this we shall make  
 out from Christ's expounding the Parable, *Verse*  
 41. *And they shall gather out of his Kingdom all*  
*Things that offend.* Now Hereticks are not all  
 Things that offend, other scandalous Livers offend  
 also. By the *Tares* is meant, them that do Iniqui-  
 ty, *Verse* 41. Now others besides Hereticks are  
 such. And 4thly, If by the *Tares* were here meant  
 Hereticks, then by the (*Wheat*) are meant only  
 the Orthodox, and so every Man that is Ortho-  
 dox should — *shine forth as the Sun in the King-*  
*dom of Heaven,* *Verse* 43. But there are many  
 who are Orthodox, who yet are evil Livers, and  
 so will never go to Heaven. And therefore by the  
 (*Wheat*) must only be meant the truly Regene-  
 rate; and so by the (*Tares*) must not only be  
 meant Hereticks, but all other evil Doers. — And  
 further, by this it would follow, that Hereticks  
 should not be excommunicate; for that is a  
 rooting out. But what can be meant by the *Tares*  
 then? For whatever be meant by them, it will  
 follow, that by this Parable *Verse* 30, they should  
 be tolerated: And to say that all vile, scandalous  
 Persons should be tolerated, is more absurd than  
 only Hereticks should be tolerated. *Ans.* If we  
 narrowly observe Christ's Exposition of the Para-  
 ble, we will find that Part where he bids let both  
 grow together until the Harvest, is not expounded, altho'  
 he expounded the rest; which doubtless he would not  
 have omitted, if it had been his Mind, that we  
 should have built any Doctrine of this Kind on it:  
 Therefore we say, this is not Christ's Meaning,  
 that he would have all Men (how godless and  
 scandalous soever) let alone; for that were con-  
 trary to other Places of Scripture: But that Christ

' is to show when all Pains are taken by Christ's  
 ' Officers for purging the Church, yet there will be  
 ' always some Hypocrites in it, and it is Christ's  
 ' Mind, tho' he hath given Order to censure scan-  
 ' dalous Offenders, yet that his Servants should not  
 ' press after such a Separation of the Precious from  
 ' the Vile, as to have all Weeds and wicked in Heart  
 ' to be cast out; lest when they gather out the grace-  
 ' less Tares, they should root out the Wheat also.  
 ' See Page 74. and also Page 76, 77. for further  
 ' Satisfaction upon this Point."

But to conclude all, let these Deserters and  
 present Renters of these Covenants, and our Fa-  
 ther's Marriage Contract with the Lord, (wherein  
 they not only rendered up themselves, but us also  
 their Posterity to be the Lord's married People,  
 to the End of the World) see if they have not  
 bandied with, and enrolled themselves among those  
 Plotters against the Lord, mentioned *Psal. ii. 3.*  
*Let us break their Bands asunder, and cast away*  
*their Cords from us.* See Verses 4, 5, 6.

P. S. It is expected the Author will not be sur-  
 prised to see his Letter published, with the Reply  
 thereto, seeing it was his Desire, that his Papers  
 should be laid before the Author of the Review,  
 (with whom I have no Acquaintance) to be sub-  
 joined as an Appendix to his Review.





A COPY of a Letter by Mr. JOHN DICKSON, late Minister of the Gospel in Ruglen, To a Person a little before his Death, who died in the Year 1700:

THE Conception you have of the Dispensations of the Lord towards this poor plagued Church, and the Tempers of the Spirits of Professors under these Dispensations, are not different from what many of the Lord's People are groaning under: There is palpably a sensible Difference betwixt what the Church now is, and what it was many Years ago, yea what it has been within these few Years: The Church hath lost much Ground, and is daily upon the losing Hard, and it seems will continue to be so, until it please the Lord to pour down his Spirit from on high, or else by some sharp awakening Dispensation, rouze up drowsy Souls out of their Lethargy wherein they are fallen: The Lord hath given us our Requests, but hath sent Leanness unto our Souls, which quickens the Fears of some, that there is some sad Stroak to fall down, which may prove more terrifying than any former Piece of Trial that we have met with, and there are so many Fore-runners of it, that their Eyes are shut that see it not upon the Wing. Before a heavy approaching Tempest, there is the gathering of thick Clouds, the chirring of Birds, the blustering of Winds at a Distance, the thin Droppings of Rain, Snow and Hail, the Flashings of Fire; and what of these are visible and audible in our Day, they are Strangers in *Israel* that do not see and hear:

Have we not a plentifully preached Gospel without Success, without Blessing, without Fruit? Hath he not said it, that the Earth that drinketh in the Rain, that cometh oft upon it, and beareth Thorns is rejected, and near unto Cursing, the Trees that bringeth not forth good Fruit are hewed down. Our Sun is a Winter Sun, it hath Light but no Life: All the Sap of our Ministers and Professors for the most Part is sidden down to the Root; until a Spring-Summer's Sun arise upon us, it can hardly be expected that either Flourish or Fruit will be seen. It is many Years since the Sun fell low upon *Scotland*: Many a dismal Day hath it seen since 1649, at that Time our Reformation mounted towards the Height of its Horizon: And since we left our Building upon that excellent Foundation, laid by our honoured Fore-fathers, we have still moved from ill to worse: And it is like yet more (unless our gracious God prevent it) until we slide our selves out of Sight and Sense of a Reformation. We have been lately tristed with a wonderful Deliverance from the Slavery of a Heaven-daring Enemy, but not one Line of Reformation is pincelled upon our Deliverance. It is like a Sleep-drink casting into a Lethargy; yet God is good to *Israel* in the Deliverance; but the Issue of it is, every one seeking his own Things, but not the Things of Jesus Christ. We have the Shell of Ordinances and Church-Government; but want the Kernel, the great Things of Christ's Law, as to contend for his Interest wrapped under a Cloud. It is a long Time since our Covenants and Solemn Engagements looked pale, they have lost both Colour and Verdor since the rescinding our Vows to God: These Covenants are turned Skeletons, fearsome and affrighting, and former Respects to them are like gradually to dwine away under a Consumption. There are some few Things that made them, the Glory of Nations, that are now turned to a Shadow.

1. They were the Fruits of the many Prayers, Fastings, Tears, Wrestlings, and indefatigable Labours of the greatest and best Men that ever breathed in our Nation, recovering a poor People, sunk into Antichristian Darknes, to enjoy the Liberty due to them by Christ's Purchase.

2. The renewing of them so many Times under Old King *James* his Reign, spoke out the Fervency of these worthy Spirits, in Ardency and Affection to them, as Jewels of so great Value, that they were set as Gems and Pearls in Christ's Crown, to wear so long as his Interest remained in this Church.

3. The Blessings accompanying the entring into, and renewing these Covenants, were so fluent in all Church Ordinances, both secret, private, and publick, that whosoever were planted in so fruitful a Soil of such Blessings and Influences of the Spirit, could not but grow up like Calves in the Stall, fat and full of Sap.

4. These Covenants to our Fore-fathers were like the renting of their own Cloaths as *Elisha* did, and taking up *Elijah's* Mantle, and cloathing themselves with it, 2 *Kings* ii. 12, 13. Enjoying of *Moses* Spirit, *Deut.* xxiv. and like *Jeshua*, (*Chap.* xxiv.) when dying, leaving a Pawn of Remembrance unto Posterity, by engaging them in these Covenants.

5. So long as our Church clave to these our Covenants, it fell out with them, as it did with King *Asa*, 2 *Chron.* xv. 2. that the Lord was with them, while they were with him: But our Father's Offspring forsaking God, he forsook them from that Day that our Covenants were so ignominiously treated, until this Day, all Calamities (as to our Religious Concerns) have fallen upon us.

6. The late Sufferings of all who shed their Heart's Blood on the Fields and Scaffolds, Imprisonments and Banishments, were all dyed with the Crimson Blood of the Covenants, from that Day of the Force and Fury of Enemies, these solema Vows

of our worthy Fore-fathers, and the Enemies taking up Christ's March-stones, (which were the Bounds set by the most High, when he divided to the Church of *Britain* its Inheritance, and separated the Sons of *Adam*, *Deut.* xxxii. 8.) the giddy Church straying in the Wilderness is much fallen out of Sight, either of Cloud or Pillar of Fire. Our Intermixtures are turned pernicious to the Glory and Honour of Christ's House, which should not be a Den of Buyers and Sellers. When Christ scourged these Thieves out of the Temple, doubtless it signified the Purity of Reformation in Gospel Churches under the New Testament, whereunto the renowned Church of *Scotland* was aspiring in our happy Covenanting Days. And tho' the late Sufferings of our Brethren seemed to be heavy to bear, yet two prime Truths were sealed with their Blood, (and that of the best, as of our honourable Nobles, faithful Ministers, Gentry, Burghers, and Commons of all Sorts) which were never before sealed, either by the Blood of the primitive Martyrs, or our late Martyrs in the Dawning of our Reformation: And these two Truths were *Christ's Headship in the Church*, in Despite of Supremacy, and bold Erastianism. and *our Covenants*; Which two great Truths were in the Mouths of all our Worthies, when mounting their bloody Theatres and Scaffolds, ascending up as it were to God in a perfumed Cloud of transporting Joy, that they were honoured to suffer upon so clear Grounds. That Supremacy was so agasted by our Covenants, that no Rest could it have till it got the Grave-stone laid upon them, and so conjured all who tasted the Liquor of that Supremacy, that the Thoughts of getting the buried Covenants out of the Grave, is more terrible to them than the Devils, who are now, in Place of our Vows to God, managing their Diabolical Games in these Places, where the Covenants were most in Honour and Request, the one buried, and the other rising in its Room. What Inferences may be from it, but that he sends evil Spirits amongst us,

us, as he did among that People who so unworthily requitted the most High. But treat these Covenants so basely who will, there will undoubtedly be a Resurrection of them again, when those who now have unhanfome Kindness unto them, from their now Damp of Neutrality, will look pale upon them. Let us never dream of a reviving Spirit among us, till there be a reviving Respect to those solemn Vows of God. Ah! for a Touch of that Spirit that was poured down in Floods when the Covenants were solemnly entered into; the burning Flame of the Love of God, of Christ, of his Interest, of his Ordinances, flew so universally through the Nation, that the Zeal of God's House set all in a Conflagration; Ministers preached like the Oracles of God, giving Responses, People heard as if they would have swallowed up the Minister with Hearts and Eye. What Heart-grippings, what Soul-meltings, what Affections inflamed all on Fire for Christ and his Interest? What Fervour and Zeal against professed Enemies? The Church was then like the *Eden* of God, every precious Stone was its Covering. Ah! When these Covenants shall revive, that shall be like a Resurrection from the Dead. They were buried in Dishonour, but they shall rise in Honour. Let us not dream that our Reformation is running to a finall Eclipse; nay, poor *Scotland*, for all the Ills that follow it, is a glittering Gem in our Lord's Crown; I can never forget the utmost Ends of the Earth for his Possession, *Psal.* ii. nor the Isles of *Shittim* and *Kittim* to be the Father's Gift to the Mediator: It is his own Ground by Gift, Conquest, Infestment, and Possession, and his Gift passed the Great Seal in our late suffering Times, when sealed with so much Blood, which was precious in the Sight of the Lord; after that, the Hills flowed with Milk and new Wine, and the Fountain came forth of the House of the Lord that watered the Valley of *Shittim*. Much Blood and much Treasure hath been spent to set the flourishing Crown upon Christ's

Head

Head in *Scotland*, Declarations, Acts of Councils, and Parliaments, Remonstrances, Engagements, Vows, Covenants: But the sealing Blood of the late Martyrs was the Cape-stone of all. The primitive Martyrs sealed the prophetick Office of Christ with their Heart's Blood. The reforming Martyrs sealed his Priestly Office with their Blood; but the last of all our Martyrs have sealed his Kingly Office with their best Blood: They indeed have cemented it upon his Royal Head, so that to the End of the World it shall not drop off again, whatever the picking of quivering spirited *Erastians* say to the contrary. Christ's own Land shall yet grow as the Lillie, and shall cast forth its Roots as *Lebanon*: They that dwell under its Shadow shall return, they shall revive as the Corn, and grow as the Vine; he who is wise shall understand these Things, for the Ways of the Lord are right, and the Just shall walk in them. It is amusing to some Persons how it is fallen out, that through all the Corners of *Scotland* there are so few in the Shire you live in, that have been honoured to seal the Headship of Christ with their Blood upon Scaffolds. And again, It is also amazing from whence it is, that the Devil is so prodigious, and in a Manner hath taken up his Houf-quarters in these Bounds more visibly and audibly than in any other Part of the *Scots Nation*, playing his Games in such Tricks, that the Sophists of our Nation are at a Stand, reeling to and fro, and put to their Wit's End, how to stop his Career. Pure Respects to our National Vows, it may be, would conjure more that daring and bold Enemy than many Essays yet fallen upon. Let the Words of famous Mr. *Guthrie*, when he ended his last Words upon the Scaffold, to the People, after the Cloth was upon his Face, and slipping it up again, with a loud Voice, crying to the People, *The Covenant, the Covenant shall be Scotland's Reviving*; I say, Let these his very last Words sink deep into your Minds. He was a *Seer* in our Church worth Ten Thou-

Thousand; for as the Man was, so was his Strength. If there were but a little Appearance of that Spirit which acted our worthy Forefathers in our publick Assemblies, and in Preaching, you would see a wonderful Alteration in the Face of Affairs, the Fields; I assure you, would look white near unto the Harvest; If we would but adventure to trace our Defections from the Breach of the Act of Classes in the Year 1650, all alongst to this Day or our being buried in the Grave of Neutrality, and all to edge up the Spirits of the People into a due Sense of our woful and irrevocable like backsliding from God, (who hath acted many a Wonder for *Scotland*) you would find a perfumed Smoke of Incense, springing from our Altar in savoury and Soul refreshing Blessings. But ah! when shall this Day dawn? So long as the Common Enemy are gaining their long wished for Hopes, that Ministers in their publick Preachings must confine themselves to their Nick-named *Faith* and *Repentance*, without any Encroachment upon Christ's proper Rights to his Church, in the glorious Work of Reformation, lest constructed Firebrands and seditious, which in running the full Career, may gradually drop into Superstition, through Neutrality; and thence plunge into an Abyss of the Shadow of Popery.

But to sum up shortly all my present Thoughts of the Time in this one, I cannot see an Evasion of the Church, in its present Circumstances, from a sharp and more trying Furnace, than ever it has yet met with, come the Trial from what Air it will. It fears me, our Principles are so slippery, and the Truths of God so superficially rooted in us, that when we are thrown into the Furnace, many of us shall melt all away to Dross. The good Lord preserve *Scotland* from the Likeness of the present Persecutions of *France*; That a Physician just now by Edict must not visit a sick Person, under the Pain of Death, unless he take a Popish Priest with him to administer their Idolatrous Sacraments to him, which

if he refuse, then he is to be denied Burial, and the dead Body exposed to ravenous Beasts to prey upon. I hope God in Mercy will prevent what is above the Strength of many Thousands seeming zealous Professors to undergo. It is many Years since I heard one of the greatest Seers in our Nation in Horror, and with Fear dreading the heavy Judgments of God upon the byassed Professors of the West of *Scotland*: but all that I say, not diminishing my Hopes of the Lord Jesus his reserving his purchased Inheritance in his own covenanted Land. Tho' *Malachy* be afrighted at the Day of his coming, and be made to cry out, *Who may abide it?* Chap. iii. 1, 2, 3. When he sits as a Refiner and Purifier of the Sons of *Levi*, a Remnant shall be left, that shall be as the Tile Tree or the Oak, whose Seed is in them when they cast their Leaves, so the holy Seed shall be the Substance thereof.

To revive a Reflection upon two stupendious Passages of Providences, I know would have an imbittering Relish to many Professors in your Country Side; the one is, upon the last Indulgence, wherein Professors by Bond and Penalty obliged themselves to produce their Minister before the Council when called for. This was a Restriction so narrow, that all the Freedom and Faithfulness of Ministers in their Office was so blocked up, that either Conscience toward God in discharging of necessary Duty, behoved utterly to be buried, or else the Life of their Minister exposed to Sacrifice. No Policy could forgo or escape here, and if this be not an universal Evil to be mourned over, let Conscience and Reason judge; yet this is looked upon to be but a Trip in these gloomy Times, of inconsiderable Moment, tho' it was the Briar clefted by that Supremacy, which not only hath wounded our Solenin Vows to Death, but buried the Faithfulness and Freedom of the Churches Seers; as to the publick Interest of Christ in their Graves: And tho' there be heaping up the Multiplicity of Professors

Advers Cates in publick, flying up to the Head, not reaching the Heart, except in transient Flashes, it is to be feared, that our Gospel-Blessings shall remain under Eclipse.

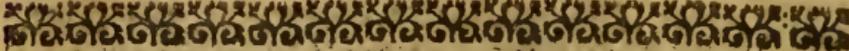
The other stupendious Providence is, the Obliterating the Rich Blessing of the Gospel in our late Suffering Times, when Blessings not only accompanied these Solemn Field Meetings; but extraordinary Influences in Gifts of Freedom and Faithfulness were poured down upon these Ministers, who went out with their Lives in their Hands, setting their Faces as Flints against the Heaven-daring Violations done to the Mediator. I call to mind a Passage with perpetuated Remembrance, that in one Shire of this Kingdom, there were about Thirty Ministers, who cheerfully offered up their Service to Christ, all by Turns, out of *Edinburgh*, and each of all these when they returned back to *Edinburgh* again, being questioned, what Pleasure, what Delight, and what Liberty they had in managing that hazardful Task? They answered, That so soon as they set Foot in these Bounds, another Spirit came upon them, and no other Reason could they give of it, but that God wrought so mightily, that they looked upon it as *genius loci*, that God sensibly, at that Time, was in that Country working Wonders: But the most Part of all these are in their Places, resting on their Beds, and their Works follow them.

Thus in Answer to yours, I have given you some of my confused Thoughts of the present Times, wishing you God's Blessing in sucking Honey out of the Eater.

JOHN DICKSON:

F I N I S.





# ADVERTISEMENT.

**L**ET the Reader carefully observe the Passages pointed to in the *Errata*, for his right Understanding the Places where they occur.

## ERRATA.

**P**Age. 35. l. 36. Rev. iii. 1. for *v.* r. 11. Pag. 36. l. 16 r. *Isa.* xlv. 5. *in its own Words, here printed in the Words of Isa.* lxiv. 5. Pag. 38. l. 7. for *Grull,* r. *Grall.* Pag. 42. l. 33. for *a,* r. *any.* Pag. 47. l. 19. for *Cufers.* r. *Causers.* Pag. 49. l. 37. r. *But especially his regal Dignity, after Mediatorial Offices, in* l. 24. Pag. 52. l. 22. for that r. *what.*

